



NOTES

COLORADO FARM TO SCHOOL TASK FORCE QUARTERLY MEETING

June 26th, 10am – 2pm

Fort Lyon Correctional Facility, 30999 County Road 15, Las Animas

In Attendance

Jane Brand, Krista Garand, Julie Moore, Susan Motika, Andy Nowak, Kristin Tucker, Jeremy West, Wendy White

Staff in Attendance

Lyn Kathlene, Rebecca Kahn

Other Attendees

Julia Erlbaum, Candace Krebs, Dwight Gardner, Kaye Kasza, RaeLynn Pomsten, Sherry Sun, Michele Girard, Jay Winner, Doris Morgan, Lennece Saracino, Lisa Trigilio, Bob Bucholz

Action Items / Decisions

- **Develop a Federal Grant Support Application:** Create a set of questions to assess whether federal grants advance our charge, in the form of a one pager that the applicant fills in. If support is to be granted, then we will ask the applicant to write the first draft of a letter of support and the Task Force will revise it. Require a 2 week lead time. Include our decision criteria and guidelines. Task Force members will be required to go through the same process as anyone else. Include questions such as these:
 - Does it fit onto our roadmap?
 - Does it advance our charge?
 - How does your application fit with one of our goals?
- **Decision / Action Item:** We will submit comments to the USDA on their FTS Census. Spark will draft a response and send it out to everyone for input. Once approved we'll send it in as our formal response. We will submit comments such as the following:
 - We're excited to see you collect this data. This is something we've talked about doing.
 - It sounds like you're collecting retroactive data, and some districts won't have that data at their fingertips, so 20 minutes is not reasonable. We recommend asking districts to collect data during the upcoming year and then re-survey at end so they can submit the data.
 - Things we'd like to see collected include:
 - How things are changing over time (identify growth).
 - How many districts in CO are participating in FTS programs?
 - What stage of FTS are you in?
 - The level of participation.

- What kinds of products are being sourced?
 - Distance of products being sourced.
 - How are you getting food – directly through farm or through distributor.
 - The category of food – dairy, veg, meat, etc.
 - How long you've been participating.
 - Changes in attendance and academic performance.
- **Decision:** 2013 legislation:
 - TF supports adding the proposed new members: 2 local producers, an additional parent representative, and a representative from CALPHO or a local public health representative. TF decided not to pursue a representative from CDE Curriculum unit because it is not feasible for the office at this time.
 - The Task Force agrees to pursue adding an opt-in on local preference sourcing for schools to Colorado's reasonably exceeds statute.
 - **Action Item:**
 - Wendy White and Lyn Kathlene will meet with Dave Maynard to review Task Force Duties.
 - Check with CDPHE to see if they can create new notebook for Dave Maynard.

Task Force Membership Discussion

- Dave Maynard with FreshPack has agreed to become a Task Force member. Next step is to meet with Dave to review Task Force duties.
- Need to create notebook for new Task Force members. CDPHE created the original notebooks. Check to see if they can replicate for new members.

Develop a Federal Grant TA process

- We need a formal process for review with a few key questions to assess the application in a fair manner.
- We have no need to comment on grants – the Task Force should just support or not support.
- **Decision / Action Item:** Create a set of questions to assess whether federal grants advance our charge, in the form of a one pager that the applicant fills in with bullet points. If support is to be granted, then we will ask the applicant to write the first draft of a letter of support and the Task Force will revise it. Require a 2 week lead time. Include our decision criteria and guidelines.
 - Criteria and guidelines should include:
 - How is this project sustainable?
 - How is this project coordinated with other organizations or systems?
 - Does this project identify and address gaps in the FTS system?
- Task Force members will be required to go through the same process as anyone else. Include questions such as these:
 - Does it fit onto our roadmap?
 - Does it advance our charge?
 - How does the application fit with one or more of our goals?

USDA Farm to School Census – Task Force Response

- The Task Force has an opportunity to respond to the USDA's proposed Farm to School (FTS) census! The census is intended to generate new data collection to provide state-level estimates of the prevalence and geographic distribution of School Food Authorities (SFAs) conducting Farm to School activities. Goals:
 - Establish baseline measure of local food purchases
 - Map SFAs procuring locally in 2011-12 to understand geographic distribution of FTS
 - Set priorities for USDA programming related to local school food sourcing
 - Set priorities for USDA outreach and technical support
- A 2011-12 Farm to School Census questionnaire will be distributed electronically to all public school district SFA directors. The request will be made from Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Child Nutrition Division, through State Child Nutrition Directors. 3 reminder emails will be sent. Participation is voluntary – no one loses their funding if they don't fill it out. A sample of non-respondents will receive follow up phone call
- The first target population is State Child Nutrition Directors in all 50 states and DC (n=51), who will provide lists & contact information of all SFAs in their states to whom will be forwarded the FTS Census survey invitation. The time burden for the Nutrition Directors is thought to be about 1 hour.
- The universe for the sample is SFA directors in 50 states and DC (n=13,629). The time burden for them is thought to average about 9 minutes: 5 minutes for districts without local procurement program, 20 minutes for districts with local procurement (estimate: 20% of SFAs have local procurement), and 15 minutes for call with non-respondents in follow up sample.
- The comment period deadline is August 6, 2012.
- The USDA is requesting comment on:
 - Whether proposed collection of info is necessary for proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether it will have practical utility
 - The accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including validity of methodology and assumptions used
 - Ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of information to be collected
 - Ways to minimize the burden of collection of information, including use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques.
- **Decision / Action Item:** We will submit comments to the USDA on their FTS Census. Spark will draft a response and send it out to everyone for input. Once approved we'll send it in as our formal response. We will submit comments such as the following:
 - We're excited to see you collect this data. This is something we've talked about doing.
 - It sounds like you're collecting retroactive data, and some districts won't have that data at their fingertips, so 20 minutes is not reasonable. We recommend asking districts to collect data during the upcoming year and then re-survey at end so they can submit the data.
 - Things we'd like to see collected include:
 - How things are changing over time (identify growth).
 - How many districts in CO are participating in FTS programs?
 - What stage of FTS are you in?
 - The level of participation.
 - What kinds of products are being sourced?

- Distance of products being sourced.
- How are you getting food – directly through farm or through distributor.
- The category of food – dairy, veg, meat, etc.
- How long you've been participating.
- Changes in attendance and academic performance.

Update - Food Systems Advisory Council

- The Food Systems Advisory Council was established by LiveWell Colorado through bill '10-106. It is made up of key food related stakeholders. It is an Advisory Council, so it makes recommendations to the general assembly on how to improve the food systems overall in Colorado.
- The last meeting was March 22nd. Next meeting is this Thursday, June 28, 2012, at Project Angel Heart, 1-5pm. Subcommittees:
 - The Communications Subcommittee is working to inventory local food coalitions. They hired a summer intern to gather info on how to support local food systems groups throughout Colorado.
 - The Economic Development Subcommittee continues to host listening sessions all over the state as they have been for the past 6 months. The purpose of them is to better understand the barriers and opportunities so that we can make effective recommendations to the legislature.
 - The Healthy Food Access Subcommittee has been really busy trying to articulate a mission and move our work forward to create an environment where all Coloradans have access to healthy food. This committee is co-hosting a summit with LiveWell this fall. Date is TBD. All info can be found on <http://www.CoFoodSystemsCouncil.org>. Next meeting is Thursday June 28th, 11:30am-12:30pm.
- Information about the Council is also on the Colorado Department of Agriculture website.
- The Council and the FTS-TF are NOT redundant. Each is working to leverage the other's work, and the two groups are very integrated. There is cross-representation on every subcommittee of both groups.

Update: Year 1 Executive Summary Released

- CDPHE's www.coprevent.org website is where we locate things like the FTS Executive Summary and other documents, like our legal research in to FTS issues, for example. The site gets thousands of hits on a weekly basis. It's a great place to advertise FTS information.
- We had a media release of the Year 1 Executive Summary, and Susan Motika did an interview with The Barn radio station. The station has been very supportive and has invited regular updates. Jeremy West also did a radio interview with Jeremy Weathers.
- The point of getting the word out is to be known as a place where schools and communities can get help to advance Farm to School efforts.

Presentation: DPS Urban Farm Project

- DPS has been on a path for many years towards FTS. It started with school gardens. Learning Landscapes is a project where outdoor spaces are being improved, and gardens are a part of that improvement. They provide educational opportunities, cooking classes, farmer's markets, etc.
- There are over 70 school gardens at DPS, within a few years we will have a garden at every elementary school.

- The gardens provide produce to the school cafeterias. Kids harvest produce weekly, which they weigh, invoice, and then Theresa Hafner at DPS buys it from them. The money goes back into the school gardens.
- The program started installing salad bars in 2010, which resulted in a jump from 500,000 to 800,000 pounds of fresh produce – a 54% jump in purchase of fresh produce.
- Bradley Elementary Farm – this school previously had an acre of gravel, and now they’ve replaced all that gravel with garden plots. They also have a school and community garden. A second school is now fully planted as well with a school garden and a farm. Projecting a production of 18,000 pounds per acre of produce – typical salad bar items.
- The Colorado Health Foundation (CHF) is supporting a feasibility study to look at what it would take to roll out a DPS food system on much more DPS land – crops, school kitchens, processing and storage food hubs. The study is wrapping up now. This proposed project would be the first in the nation of its kind (using own lands). Projections say we can grow 41% of what DPS buys fresh in season, and 59% would be purchased through normal channels. Mapping shows that there are 11 acres of land on School property and 11 acres of vacant DPS land. 8 sites at DPS elementary schools, and 2 sites on vacant land of bigger plots.
- DPS is going to voters for a school improvement bond this November, and we originally wanted to ask for \$2 million to develop 21 acres (water, soil testing, amendments, fencing, one year of support to get farming off the ground, modular food hub in the form of large semi-trucks for mobile processing.) Eventually a brick and mortar food hub site. We eventually reduced the request to \$1.2 million. Even so, the Bond Committee decided not to include our funding request. However, the Chief Operating Officer is giving us some seed money to continue the process - \$100K at a time. By showing some progress and success, we hope to go to the voters in the next bond cycle.
- We estimate that it takes about \$30K to get an acre up and running, so with \$100K we can get 4-5 acres going, and then we may go back to CHF with some baseline data for a grant request. We are already harvesting off both the fields – some of the produce goes to the summer salad bars, and some to the catering program, which is politic because that program feeds some of the bond committee meetings.
- These are organic farms, which means that the school yards are being converted into organic yards. DPS has scratch cooking, which means that employees are learning a trade. The food is grown locally, sourced locally, as we grow this program we hope this will resonate with the voters.
- **Question:** Do you have a protocol or write-up of the use of school produce in school cafeterias?
 - **Response:** Yes.
- **Question:** From an FTS-TF perspective – it seems like this is an incredible pilot and opportunity for TA all over Colorado. What about packaging a CHF template for doing this around Colorado?
 - **Response:** We need to present the feasibility study to CHF first, but once that is done it becomes a public document.
- The team includes Lois Brink, University of Colorado; Real Food Colorado; Theresa Hafner’s department; a legal intern from CDPHE; and Agriburbia.
- The study is a comprehensive overview, about how efficient a school district can get with growing its own food, how to manipulate the product to get max usage. There is a continued commitment to Slow Food Movement ideals to integrate farming into food production and young children’s education.
- The study is being presented to CHF by middle of July. Details can’t be released until CHF signs off on it, but an executive summary is being released to public.

- **Question:** Does the study indicate a cost savings over conventional means of procurement?
 - **Response:** Yes, when used fresh.
- This model isn't intended to create profit – it looks at long term health benefits to children, environment, and food production.
- **Question:** What is the reaction from local farmers?
 - **Response:** Agriburbia is a local farmer. We think it will be positive, because farmers leasing the land know exactly what to grow and that they will have a market.
- Water – the study shows a great water savings over sod (60% more water with sod; 25% water savings with low water grass). Schools are providing the water.

Presentation: Fort Lyon Correctional Facility History and Repurposing Efforts

Bill Long, Bent County Commissioner

- “It’s not often that we get people from outside Southeast Colorado – we really appreciate the interest.”
- Fort Lyon was first established about 20 miles east of here and originally called Fort Wise. Its purpose was to provide protection to people traveling on the Santa Fe trail. In 1861 it was renamed Fort Lyon for the 1st union general killed in the civil war, General Nathaniel Lyon, killed on 8/10/1861 in the battle of union creek. In 1867 it was moved to its current location. The previous location was very close to the river and was flooded. In early November of 1864 the commander of Ft Lyon was Major Wynkoop, and he was very friendly to the Indians. Major Wynkoop was later transferred to Kansas, and the new commandant commanded the massacre at Sand Creek.
- The Fort has 6 original adobe buildings, stables, and rock buildings that are part of the dairy. The original army hospital also still exists. It was operated as a fort until the mid-1890’s. In 1906 the navy acquired the facility and opened a Tuberculosis facility here. They treated Americans as well as Germans and other foreigners during WWI.
- In the 1990’s, they had a 1000 veterans here. In 1999 the VA said the facility was too large and they wanted to partner with another entity if one could be found. Another partner couldn’t be found, but instead it was turned into a neuropsychiatric facility until 2001. In 2001 the Colorado Department of Corrections took it over and operated it as a medium security prison until March of 2012.
- In the 1980s, the laws changed in the way people in mental institutions were treated. The state hospitals in Colorado closed, the VA changed their mission, and then when they closed Ft Lyons as a psychiatric facility the prison population began to grow quite rapidly. It is an unfortunate fact that a large part of the prison population comes from the former mental institutions.
- The Governor’s Office is committed to the repurposing of Ft Lyons, but they are looking for an entity to take it off the state’s hands. We’ve met with the Department of Labor, the Department of Homeland Security, the Veteran’s Administration, the National Guard, the Department of Defense, and a whole host of private operators. The Anschutz Foundation has a training facility to provide training for emergency responders, people like the National Guard, military, police, to respond to man-made and natural disasters, and although they were interested in this facility they decided not to pursue it.
- At this point we’d knocked in every door possible to find someone to take over the facility. There’s a clause that says if the state can’t use the facility for Corrections, it reverts back to the VA, but that VA has to be agreeable to that, and they’re not. So

the Governor's Office has realized they need to be part of whatever repurposing effort takes place. They now support the idea of providing transitional housing to homeless or in-need veterans. Vets could come to Ft Lyons for 2 years, receive education, SA treatment, PTSD treatment, career training. There is also a need to provide these same services to non-veterans. An Internal Working Group has been formed with people from HCPF, Denver Health, Health Department, etc, developing a business plan to look at revenue for housing and treatment for veterans and non-veterans. It is hoped that funding can be found through HUD, Medicare, Medicaid, and VA. Our hope is to get someone in the facility by August or September. We hope to have a good business plan before we open the doors.

- A Food Hub could be a great complement of the new mission of Fort Lyons. A Harvest Farm on a much larger scale.

Information Hub Mock-Up & Discussion

- The Information Hub Website provides information for producers, community members, and schools, so they don't have to search for information from multiple different sites. The Work Group met in May and made a number of decisions on how to organize the site. They are now ironing out the format:
 - We're going for a clean, uncluttered look. Easy navigation on top and sides. Pages for FTS-TF, Grants, Blog, Event Calendar, Contact Us. Right now the site is set up to cycle through a couple of different pictures. Colored navigation buttons for schools, producers, parents, students. Also links on front page for news feed, upcoming events, maybe a facebook widget, latest blog.
 - The calendar – we want any group to be able to post their event, although there will be some kind of clearance for that through Wendy White's Office.
 - We may not have every piece up and running right from the start, but we are making a push to get the crucial information up first. It will continue as a work in progress.
 - What about Vendors? Friends? Increase to five categories? Keep this in mind as we go forward. Maybe a Tab at the top called Getting Started, with links to a series of questions to point you to where you need to go, starting with What is Farm to School. A drop down for Community is really important. Increase to 5 buttons: add one for community. As we go forward, we may find that some buttons can be combined.
 - Our hope is that student advocacy groups working on improving their menus, improving local access, etc, might want to use the site.
 - Within this site there will be a login for TF members where we post things that are just for TF members. Public docs related to the TF will also be available to everyone.
 - There will also be a place for other related groups to post their information.
- Next meeting is Friday, June 29th. The site will be up by the next Task Force meeting.

Update, Deliverables, Discussion: Policy and Regulation

- Kristin Tucker, Jane Brand, Lyn Kathlene, and Susan Motika make up this work group. Completed a 50 state survey on how states are using the concept of local preferences to help gov'ts make purchasing decisions that favor locally produced food. We will put this on www.coprevent.org again and send it out to participants. Colorado has a "reasonably exceed" standard that local sources shouldn't reasonably exceed other sources in cost.

- Regulation on farm food safety is handled in various ways across the nation. There are voluntary approaches and state mandated approaches. Susan Motika works with a CU Law Student on legal and policy research to inform the field.
- Recently we were awarded a grant from the Centers for Disease Control for a Healthy Farms, Healthy People Policy Research and Analysis. We are one of 20 groups that got funded under this grant. There are 3 other groups working on FTS. We are doing an analysis looking at food safety relevant to agriculture and schools re federal, state, and local policies – looking at how the food safety components are either an opportunity to develop good strong regulation or are redundant. Also looking at what pieces are missing and making recommendations. We are going to put it into a Prezi format (a sophisticated but visually friendly way to present information). People will be able to click on what’s going on at the federal level related to school food procurement, and you will be able to drill in for more detail, and then back out to the bigger picture. We will put it on the information hub, so people can easily get to the local, state, and federal regulations. The TF could not have done this with its own funding. Ultimately we will give this to the CDC and they will roll it out to other states to fill in their state and local information. Our about-to-be-3rd-year legal intern is already interviewing people. The first interview is with local public health.

Update, Deliverables, Discussion: Legislation

- As many know the FTF was established by a law, and we sunset at the end of 2013. If we don’t extend the sunset, we won’t exist after 2013. There is currently a proposal for a 5 year period to the TF.
- Adding new members – we have an effective group but there are gaps. We would like to add 2 local producers, an additional parent representative, and a new representative from the CDE Office of Curriculum Development. The initial response to the proposal for the Office of Curriculum development was that we are too specific for them, and they can’t devote the resources to such a position.
- **Decision:** TF Supports adding the proposed new members (except Curriculum who is unable to commit at this time). TF would like to add a representative from CALPHO or a local public health representative.
- Data collection. There isn’t one cohesive, centralized way to collect data about FTS. CDE is going to be launching a new claims system. Jane Brand’s office oversees the school district’s management of the child nutrition program, which is federally funded through CDE. This school year they are implementing a new claims system where we will have school district information, and there might be an opportunity to ask additional questions related to FTS. If we are propose a new bill identifying a data collection plan, and then this could inform Jane’s claims system to add questions about FTS. It might tell us how participating in FTS affects the economics of schools. We are aiming for 2014 for this data collection to begin.
- **Comment:** When your TF engages in how to collect the data, also engage some producers, because if we make it difficult for them we’ll lose them.
 - **Response:** This would be a step by step process. We do NOT want to have chilling effect on the producers – we will bring them on board before we start down the path.
- Re local preferences, Colorado has the reasonably exceeds statute. This permits purchases locally even if it costs a little more than other sources. However, School districts are not currently covered by this, so we are exploring with the USDA the possibility of adding an opt-in for schools.
- **Decision:** The Task Force agrees to pursue adding an opt-in on local preference sourcing for schools to Colorado’s reasonably exceeds statute.
- We need to start figuring out how to quantify the economic benefits of FTS. Data collection will start to get at this, but we do need to make sure to include as many

partners as possible in any data collection effort, to make sure that ALL of the true economic benefits are identified.

Update, Deliverables, Discussion: Pilots

- A Ft. Lyon Community Meeting was held yesterday, Monday, June 25th. We had about 45 people from the community. In attendance were producers, elected officials, business people, schools, public health. We started out with a video on FTS, followed by a Food Hub presentation. Then we broke up into 5 small groups to get a better understanding of what Farm to School related things are happening around Ft Lyon, followed by a dinner discussion.
- The Colorado Correctional Industries Central City Food Hub is not moving forward –they are not ready / lack budget. ☹ We are disappointed! Budget cuts made it impossible.

Update, Deliverables, Discussion: Evaluation

- Jeremy West, Andy Nowak, Susan Motika, Jewlya Lynn, and others met recently at Spark to discuss evaluation. We need to complete a preliminary evaluation design and supply some preliminary evaluation results of data by food service directors on what's already being done on FTS. Jewlya gave a very detailed and comprehensive review of FTS evaluation strategies are being used around the country.
- The matrix (Logic Model) shows what kinds of evaluation activities that have been used.
- Our goal is to develop a Colorado FTS Evaluation Process. Jewlya Lynn will be guiding this process.
- Andy's homework is to find out what data Food Service Directors are already collecting. How many students eat, meals a day, a la carte sales, staff hours, profit –many districts collect this kind of information. Andy is gathering that data into a spreadsheet.
- Next Steps: The Bearing Fruit report's appendices have great survey instruments that have been used in the past, but the report doesn't give a step by step process of which evaluation tools make sense for particular programs. So we are developing a framework and evaluation template for schools to choose the right kind of evaluation. We will work with 2 or 3 pilot sites to try out the evaluation template. Next year, we'd like to develop some customized collection tools to answer questions we know are not getting answered. We'd like to identify the key indicators that all FTS programs should be collecting, to allow for a rich comparative analysis.

Wrap Up

- What worked today?
 - Having a report from each of the working groups. We do a lot of work between meetings so it is good to hear what the groups are doing.
 - Air conditioning!
 - Being in this county and having a partnership here has been incredible. Input from the community!
 - Seeing what DPS is doing is fantastic – presentations by other projects.
 - Just enough recap to pull us back to focus, but not taking up so much of the meeting that we don't have time for other things.
 - Great time management.
- What could we have done better?
 - Change to buffet lunch. Individual lunch portions depend on correct RSVPs, which are difficult to get!

- Make sure the timing for a two day meeting is calibrated for travelers.
- Make sure to hear the local perspective on the subject (whatever it is).
- The different between Yuma and Ft Lyon was the multiple local connections. More local connections means better turnout at community meetings. Have lots of background information on the local community – so that TF members can be aware of the sensitive issues of the community.
- Patience and realistic goals and deadlines.