



# LOCAL FOOD ACTION PLAN

## CITY OF COLUMBUS & FRANKLIN COUNTY, OHIO

**September 30, 2015 • Columbus Public Health Auditorium • 9:30am-11:00am**

### ***Purpose of the Local Food Action Plan Working Committee:***

- To engage in a broad, community-focused process to guide the development of the Local Food Action Plan
- To share expertise representing varied facets of the local food system to inform:
  - Creation of a vision for the Local Food Action Plan
  - Identification of policy and programmatic targets for the Local Food Action Plan
  - Development of action steps to achieve our vision
  - Preparation of the Local Food Action Plan and supporting documents

### **Attendance:**

#### **Local Food Action Plan Sponsors**

Dr. Teresa C. Long, MD, MPH Health Commissioner

#### **Local Food Action Plan Project Team**

Michelle Moskowitz Brown, Local Matters

Matt Brown, Franklin County Economic Development and Planning Department

Noreen Warnock, Local Matters

Autumn Trombetta, Columbus Public Health

Cheryl Graffagnino, Columbus Public Health

Barb Seckler, Columbus Public Health

Nicole Harper, Columbus City Council

Jonathan Lee, Franklin County Economic Development and Planning Department

**Meeting Facilitator:**

Tuesday Ryan Hart – Confluence Unlimited

**Working Committee Members:**

Jill Clark – John Glenn College of Public Affairs

Jeremy Taylor -DNO Produce

Nick Stanich – Franklinton Gardens

Mike Hogan – OSU Extension

Peggy Murphy - Greater Columbus Growing Coalition

Amy Bodiker-Baskes - Franklin County Local Food Council

Emily Savon – The Columbus Foundation

Dwight Beougher –Farm Bureau

David Ciccone - United Way of Central Ohio

Jenny Pope – Franklin Park Conservatory

Gregory Rutland (representing Ellen Williams) - Godman Guild

Sarah Lenkay - Mid-Ohio Foodbank

Ruben Castilla Herrera - Ohio Fair Food

Kiley Orchard (representing Ernest Perry) – Hands-On Central Ohio

Brian Williams - Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission

Mark Barbash - Finance Fund

Bob Leighty - Parsons Avenue Merchants Association

Kate Djupe – The Commissary

**Invited Guests:**

Chance Shannon – Franklin County Commissioners

Kelli Machmeier – OSU Dietetic Intern

## Meeting Agenda

Purpose of the Meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide feedback on the Current Conditions and Vision Report</li> <li>• Build our relationships to support the successful development of the Local Food Action Plan</li> </ul>	
9:30am-9:45am	<b>Welcome, Framing, Flow</b>
9:45am-9:55am	<b>Check In</b> Sharing our learning about the food system
9:55am-10:05am	<b>Presentation: Activity since last meeting</b> Developing the Current Conditions and Visions Report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surveys</li> <li>• Community Food Meetings</li> <li>• Stakeholder Interviews</li> <li>• Economic Research</li> <li>• National, State, Regional and Local Plans</li> </ul>
10:05am-10:30am	<b>Current Conditions and Vision</b> Work in sector groups and review and give feedback. Complete Template. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completeness and Accuracy: Does this accurately reflect our current conditions?</li> </ul>
10:30am-10:45am	<b>Vision Feedback</b> Reflecting on the emerging vision
10:45am-10:55am	<b>Sector Report Outs</b> Sharing back our group conversations
10:55am-11:00am	<b>Next Steps and Check Out</b> Share any next steps to expect from the committee.
11:00am	<b>Closing</b>

## **Presentation: Activity Since Last Meeting - Cheryl Graffagnino and Project Team**

### **Since January 2015....**

Input from:

- Stakeholder interviews
- 4 surveys
  - Consumer
  - Commercial Buyer
  - Processor/Distributor
  - Producer
- Local Matters developed 7 community reports based on 18 neighborhood meetings

More than 900 people participated in the process.

Reviewed more than 24 similar plans and documents:

- National
- State
- Regional
- Local

### **Since last meeting (June 17, 2015)....**

- Completed phone interviews with each Working Committee Member
- Compiled survey results
- Conducted economic data research
- Developed initial draft of *Current Conditions and Vision Report*
- Drafted *Vision Statement*

## **Sector Small Group Conversations - Current Conditions Feedback and Vision Reflection**

### ***Form(s) - Food System in Columbus and Franklin County Template***

- 1) What Works: What in this section is important to highlight to help others to understand the current state of this sector?
- 2) What's Missing: Are there key things happening in your sector that aren't reflected in the report?
- 3) How does the vision statement reflect (or not) what we want our food system to look like?

### **Producers:**

**LFAP Project Team Member:** Michelle Moskowitz Brown

**Working Committee Members:** Dwight Beougher - Franklin County Farm Bureau; Ruben Castilla Herrera – Ohio Fair Food; Mike Hogan OSU Extension, Chance Shannon – Franklin County; Nick Stanich – Franklinton Gardens; Peggy Murphy – Greater Columbus Growing Coalition

**What in this section is important to highlight to help others to understand the current state of this sector?**

- o Farmers need subsidies – ex. Land trust, incentives, transition and training for new farmers, perhaps starting at urban ag level.
- o Reliable labor is hard to come by, in particular because it is hard to know how much food you can sell, which determines harvesting needs. sometimes farmers scale back due to this uncertainty
- o “Food culture” differences –In particular our city seems to value local food on the surface, but practices are not aligned with values - restaurants are not truly buying local, and supermarkets are marketing in ways that their purchasing has not demonstrated. Our city lacks the infrastructure of say cities in North Carolina that are re-building from historical tobacco crops
- o Some farmers are interested in a local brand – properly packaged and managed
- o Funding is needed to support the start-up costs for producers

## **Producers (cont.):**

**Are there key things happening in your sector that aren't reflected in the report?**

- o Urban Ag and Community Gardens - # of farms, # of community gardens, # of acres might be more reflective of capacity (% of farmland urban vs. rural)
- o Diversity in farming – missing from general demographics
- o Regulations were cited as a concern – For example, there is the cost of meeting standards along the potential uncertainty of guarantees to purchase food. Are grower wages adjusted for inflation?

**How does the vision statement reflect (or not reflect) what we want our food system to look like?**

- o As we take action on vision, do we prioritize one over the other, (community, economy, environment) understanding that aspects of these are currently diametrically opposed? For example, prosperity for farmers and affordable food

## **Processor/Distributor:**

**LFAP Project Team Member:** Jonathon Lee; Cheryl Graffagnino

**Working Committee Members:** Brian Williams – MORPC; Bob Leighty – PAMA; Kate Djupe – The Commissary; Gregory Rutland – Godman Guild

**What in this section is important to highlight to help others to understand the current state of this sector?**

- o Columbus has lots of entrepreneurs who want to produce food for consumers
- o Columbus has extensive resources in logistics Ohio, including: Franklin County, which has enormous capacity for crop diversity
- o 4 main barriers
  - Regulations
  - Storage/Aggregation
  - Meat
  - Scaling up (processors and producers)

## **Processor/Distributor (cont.):**

**Are there key things happening in your sector that aren't reflected in the report?**

- o Definition of “processor” (does it represent the different types of processors)
- o Consumers want to buy products in their grocery stores but lack of processors/distributors prevents scaling up to grocery stores
- o Lack of cold storage for processed foods limits processing capacity
  - Particularly smaller processors
  - Significant limitation on meat processing because they cannot slaughter until they free up space in the cold storage
- o Disparate regulations and unclear responsibilities for enforcement – ex. ODA attaches multiple producers to one license – no one knows who is regulating some things
- o Food distribution requires a different logistical application – need to apply local logistical expertise to local food system
- o Scaling up successfully – “success kills a business”
- o History and capacity for crop diversity is not clear in CCVR – historical context of crop diversity and processing capacity is important (Champ Henson)
- o Ohio lacks a food identity (Michigan = blueberries, Washington = Apples)
- o Ohio is diverse in agriculture and has a lot of stories that are not being told about its diversity
- o Specialized commercial kitchen space needed (canning lines, high pressure pasteurization) – not just churches
- o Processing is the biggest gap in infrastructure – making it sustainable; connect to Kroger
- o Need to better define processor
- o Processing /Distribution needs to operate as a business – revenue generation – a model that pays for itself
- o Need business models to create facilities (e.g. co-packing, refrigerated storage and distribution for small-scale processors, high-pressure pasteurization)
- o What happened to Eat Well?

**How does the vision statement reflect (or not reflect) what we want our food system to look like?**

- o Everything is represented in the vision statement

## **Consumers (1):**

**LFAP Project Team Member:** Noreen Warnock

**Working Committee Members:** Jenny Pope – Franklin Park Conservatory;  
Emily Savors – Columbus Foundation; Dr. Teresa Long – Columbus Public Health

**What in this section is important to highlight to help others to understand the current state of this sector?**

- o Community conversations are vital
- o Local food buying and barriers
- o Food options really jump out

**Are there key things happening in your sector that aren't reflected in the report?**

- o Would like to see more on community conversations
  - Full reports are available and highlight a huge need
  - Lack of access and communication were common themes
  - Westside community groups continue to meet monthly and report out on food issues; the West Side Health Advisory Committee is not involved but Mt. Carmel Community health Resource Center and Northland are involved
- o Need food action committees in each community and a place to house them and a structure that develops capacity for community members to be involved and work together
- o Example - Northland would like to have an international food production site and farmers market to drive tourism and encourage residents from a wider Columbus demographic to come to their community and enjoy the diverse populations, their foods, and culture if they had support
- o Need clarification on terms (like farm), clarity of communication across the board (e.g. grocery stores letting you know what's on its shelf (what does local mean?))
- o Want to know more about purchasing local and the barriers
- o Over 54% say they grow their own food – seems like a really high number?
- o How do we measure the outcomes that we hope for in the Food Action Plan?



## **Consumers (1) (cont.):**

- o Little skeptical on answers to some of the survey questions
- o Are there national goals, benchmarks, and measures for local food goals we should be aiming for? USDA? Govt. Policy? Let's Move?
- o Looking at Franklin County on the whole (across all neighborhoods and socioeconomic levels) – how are we doing compared to other communities in the state and the nation?
- o Where's the Near East CHOICE Local Food Plan? There is mention of growing production/access/ and a food hub. – an update on this needs to be in the Local Food Action Plan as part of what is happening in Columbus

### **How does the vision statement reflect (or not reflect) what we want our food system to look like?**

- o Our vision statement leaves out “people” - people matter
- o What does “equitably” really mean? Maybe it should be “fair” or “just”. Some people confuse equitable with equal
- o Include the word “residents”
- o Some concern on words “food system” and what it means to people

### **Suggestions:**

- o The local food action plan...benefits the people, community, economy and environment in ways that are just (or fair) and sustainable

## **Consumers (2):**

**LFAP Project Team Member:** Autumn Trombetta

**Working Committee Members:** Amy Bodiker-Baskes – Franklin County Local Food Council; Jill Clark OSU John Glenn School; Kiley Orchard – Hands On Central Ohio; Sarah Lenkay – Mid-Ohio Foodbank

**What in this section is important to highlight to help others to understand the current state of this sector?**

## **Consumers (2) (cont.):**

- o Shows demand for local food
- o Attempts to identify diverse populations and multi-tiered approach that is necessary – there is not ONE type of consumer. Instead of or/and – can it be a multi-pronged approach?
- o Deep and solid data- an excellent starting point

### **Are there key things happening in your sector that aren't reflected in the report?**

- o “Consumer” implies an economic transaction – define consumer. Dislikes the title “consumer”
- o A way to reconcile the economic questions of the survey and the access issues of the neighborhood conversations
- o Transparency of data collection, why specific questions were asked, differences between methods – were they to serve different purposes? How do they fit together to round each other out?
- o Communicate and celebrate the uniqueness

### **How does the vision statement reflect (or not reflect) what we want our food system to look like?**

- o Want to highlight the unique relationship/collaboration between a city health department and a county planning agency

## **Commercial Buyers:**

**LFAP Project Team Member:** Matthew Brown

**Working Committee Members:** Mark Barbash – Finance Fund; Jeremy Taylor – Create Columbus Commission; David Ciccone – United Way; Nicole Harper – City of Columbus;

### **What in this section is important to highlight to help others to understand the current state of this sector?**

- o Market mechanisms do not currently exist to ensure consistency in price and availability (page 36, 3<sup>rd</sup> line)
- o We need alternate models for intermediaries to solve problems on either end
- o Price for local food is half and half higher/lower than non-local
  - Price of product depends on scale - buying higher quantities reduces per unit cost making local comparable to non-local, while buying smaller quantities increases per unit cost making local more expensive than non-local
- o Equity and living wage need to be part of the discussion

### **Are there key things happening in your sector that aren't reflected in the report?**

- o Categorizing survey results by type of buyer for spending and where product is purchased.
  - o Breakout by size: institutions, groceries, restaurants
  - o Spending and where purchased from...
- o Consumer/Buyer preference for a product at a certain spec is problem – educational campaign for “ugly food”
- o Customer's specs don't match what's available (e.g. not enough peaches in Ohio; sweet potatoes, peel, cut, quarter)
- o Parallel Challenges – Local – Healthy – Hungry
- o Categorization of class of commercial buyers
- o Seasonality of food
- o Connection is big gap for smaller stores – they need consistency
- o Gaps in market are barrier to local food system, distributors need to help facilitate connection between producer and commercial buyers

## **Commercial Buyers (cont.):**

**How does the vision statement reflect (or not reflect) what we want our food system to look like?**

What does this vision mean to someone in the community that's not in the food circle? What does "community" mean?

## **Next Steps**

Develop Recommendations

- December 2015: Working Committee 2
- February 2016: Working Committee 3

December 2015 – Working Committee Meeting 2:

- Identify policy and program recommendations
- Discuss best practices to address these issues locally