



### Workshop Session Notes

#### **I. Farm to Institution: Integrating local food into restaurants, schools, hospitals and universities**

*Facilitator: Colette DePhelps*

*Resource people: Leah Clark, Mike Thomsen and Karl Sutton*

The UI Sustainability Center and its Food Systems Committee will pursue (1) integration of local/regional food at the University of Idaho, (2) strengthen local food systems, and (3) work in partnership with the Moscow School District whenever possible, by following through with a dozen next steps identified at the Farm to Institution track. To build a farm to institution mechanism we are beginning with four items.

1. To strengthen and localize dairy production the Sustainability Center in partnership with UI's Dairy Farm have commissioned a feasibility study to examine the economic potential of a dairy. The study estimates that UI milk production could potentially supply the UI campus, K-12 schools and grocery outlets in Moscow with local milk.
2. The Sustainability Center will support development of direct contracts between UI Campus Dining/Sodexo and Soil Stewards, UI's student-led organic farm.
3. UI Campus Dining, which has tremendous buying power, will create a purchasing inventory spreadsheet of produce, protein and dairy products by item, wholesale price, and pounds required per week by fall 2010.
4. The Sustainability Center will collaborate with Idaho Preferred to connect large capacity producers to UI Campus Dining. Large capacity producers will be encouraged to apply for Sodexo's "approved vendor index status" and to develop direct contracts with Campus Dining.

#### **II. Developing Food Processing on the Palouse: Bringing local meat and value-added products to market**

*Facilitators: Cinda Williams, Lorie Higgins and Skeeter Lynch*

*Resource people: Nancy Becker, Janie Burns and Karl Sutton*

Facilitators began by identifying the current baseline of participants' interests, knowledge and status of processing on the Palouse. Participants rotated through stations hosted by facilitators and resource people in a modified version of a Speak Easy Café. Issues discussed and recorded were: 1) foods/products we would like to see produced locally; 2) current food processing on the Palouse; 3) resources/skills/knowledge of this group of

participants; and 4) specific goals for the day. Participant goals were categorized into three areas: Commercial Kitchens, Meat Processing and Networking. The group felt networking needs would be met throughout the event, so individuals decided to prioritize the other two areas for their group discussions. Resource people provided a 'spring-board' for group discussions by sharing experiences with processing facilities, included meat processing and commercial kitchens. Their talks covered establishing need, key resources they utilize, financing, rules and regulations, challenges, opportunities and barriers. Action plans developed in the two groups were:

**Commercial Kitchen:**

1. Feasibility: Inventory of needs /products that people want to process
2. Follow up meeting of potential food processors
3. Inventory of resources
4. Look into developing a marketing association

**Meat Processing:**

1. Assessing current processing facilities in N. Idaho including more specifics on Vandal Meats at UI.
2. Set up Yahoo group list to maintain contact between group members.
3. Explore and identify grains and feed producers in the Palouse region.
4. Demonstrate need, potential number of livestock processors, and the potential of revenue generation for presenting to UI. Demonstrate that smaller livestock numbers are flexible to fit in between teaching and research projects at UI Meat Lab. Demonstrate what we (producers) can offer Vandal meats/UI.
5. Work with Business College to assess economic viability.
6. Consider local population of Muslim/African/religious based, personal preference for meat products.

**III. Farming as a Business and a Lifestyle: Starting or expanding your farm and selling to your community**

*Facilitator: Cathy Perillo*

*Resource people: Mary Embleton, Mimi Feuling, Diane Gasaway, Marian Gillis, Diane Green and Laura Theis*

Our session had 26 participants, ranging from advanced farmers who have been pushing/re-designing farming systems for many years to farmers' market managers to people who want to get into farming, including at least a few enthusiastic folks who as of yet have little or no experience. Since our group was fairly diverse, with a range of goals, we did not work toward a single action plan. Instead, we focused on the networking goal of the conference and eventually split into interest groups, one of whom did write up a formal action plan.

We started the session with a series of questions that participants discussed in small groups and then reported back to the whole group. Participants rotated for the different questions so that everyone got to meet and talk with quite a few of the others in the room.

From these questions we learned the main interest areas of the folks present, as well as identified key strengths and weaknesses of local food opportunities in the Palouse region.

After lunch, we broke into interest groups for discussion. These were: Getting Started in farming, Sustainable Farming Practices, Consumer Education, Increasing Farm Profitability, and Networking/Making Connections. The Getting Started in Farming group developed an action plan with the goal of establishing successful, sustainable farming enterprises. A key focus of the plan was for the group to help increase connections between beginning farmers in the region - through joining existing groups (e.g. Rural Roots) and setting up communication forums and in-person meetings. The other group had good discussions - so good they didn't 'get to' the action-planning step.

#### **IV. Backyard Bounty: Increasing Community Self-Sufficiency**

*Facilitators: Amy Grey and Carol Spurling*

*Resource people: Lydia Clayton, Amy Grey, Santiago Gurule, David Knittel, Sandy McCurdy and Carol Spurling*

The Backyard Bounty session explored the role of residential growing in building local food resources for the entire community. Participants expressed interest in strengthening community self-sufficiency, exploring communal gardening models and improving educational resources focused on nutrition, cooking, and preserving. Several specific action items emerged from this session including the creation of a communication network for regional community gardens, preliminary planning for a community tool library and seed swap program and increased educational programming focused on cooking and preserving through the Moscow Food Co-op.