

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

DATE: 11/03/2014

DEPARTMENT: Admin

DEPT. HEAD SIGNATURE: HD

SUBJECT:

Hunger Coalition's presentation of Community Food Assessment

AUTHORITY: ID Code _____ IAR _____ City Ordinance/Code _____
(IF APPLICABLE)

BACKGROUND/SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Members of the Hunger Coalition will present information about the Community Food Assessment

FISCAL IMPACT / PROJECT FINANCIAL ANALYSIS:

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT BY OTHER AFFECTED CITY DEPARTMENTS: (IF APPLICABLE)

<input type="checkbox"/> City Administrator	<input type="checkbox"/> Library	<input type="checkbox"/> Benefits Committee
<input type="checkbox"/> City Attorney	<input type="checkbox"/> Mayor	<input type="checkbox"/> Streets
<input type="checkbox"/> City Clerk	<input type="checkbox"/> Planning	<input type="checkbox"/> Treasurer
<input type="checkbox"/> Building	<input type="checkbox"/> Police	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Engineer	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Works, Parks	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Fire Dept.	<input type="checkbox"/> P & Z Commission	<input type="checkbox"/> _____

RECOMMENDATION FROM APPLICABLE DEPARTMENT HEAD:

Information only, no council action required.

ACTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL:

Date : _____

City Clerk: _____

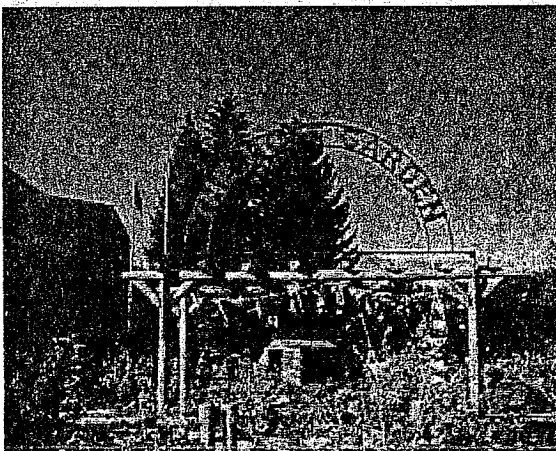
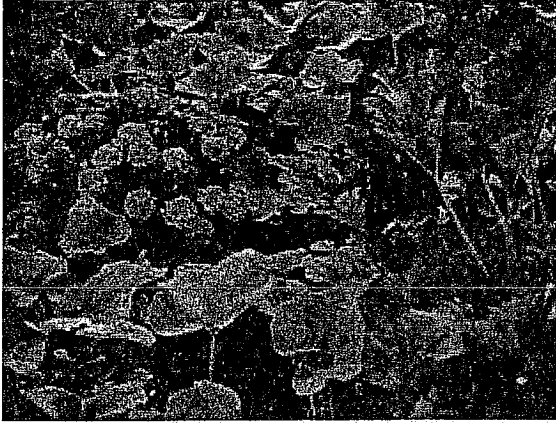
FOLLOW-UP:

*Ord./Res./Agrmt./Order Originals: Record
Copies (all info.):
Instrument # _____

*Additional/Exceptional Originals to: _____
Copies (AIS only)



COMMUNITY FOOD ASSESSMENT



Introduction

The Hunger Coalition strives to end hunger in our community by **providing wholesome food**, collaboration, education, and advocacy. This year The Hunger Coalition, along with two **AmeriCorps VISTA members** and assistance of the Public Policy Research Center at Boise State University, will be undertaking a **community food assessment**. The food assessment will be looking at **food security levels, uniting community stakeholders, and affecting community health policy**.

Why a Food Assessment?

Feeding America's statistics have shown that we are currently helping 84% of the food insecure population in the community, but our numbers show something very different. **From 2012 to 2013 our services have increased 32%; during the first six months of 2014 a 55% increase of families and individuals has occurred**, and the number of seniors and those 18 years and younger has soared.

The food assessment will take a more detailed look at the underlying social, economic, and institutional factors in a community that affect the **quantity and quality of available food** and its **affordability in relation to the sufficiency of financial resources** available to obtain it.

Strengthening Our Community

The food assessment will show us the **true number of the food insecure population** in our community as well as the **barriers** that keep people from accessing The Hunger Coalition's and other organization's services.

Bringing a variety of stakeholders together will **help find community based solutions to the food security problem**. These community based solutions and relationships will be putting the resources in place to help break the cycle of poverty we face.

Community Food Assessment

Through the food assessment, stakeholders from different areas of the community will work to **develop a joint agenda and action plan**. The team will use the USDA's toolkit which looks at community demographics, community food resources, household food security, food resource availability and affordability, and community food production resources.

Once these foundational steps have been taken we will be looking for the next steps our community can take to **ensure that our local food system improves so everyone has the ability to be food secure**.

The community food assessment will build solid relationships and next steps that will help redefine our community for the better.

What is a Community Food Assessment?

Our Community Food Assessment will examine a broad range of community food issues and assets in Blaine County including food security, productive capacity of the land and economic development opportunity. It will be a collaborative and participatory process representing the whole community. Information from the assessment will provide a common understanding of the local food system, revealing opportunities to support the community's environmental, economic, social and nutritional health.

Who is leading this effort?

The Hunger Coalition is responsible for hosting all aspects of the year-long Community Food Assessment, with the ultimate goal of creating a healthy food system that is accessible to all members of the community.

What have other communities achieved through a Community Food Assessment?

Farm to School Program Growth: Imagine a student's lunch full of fresh and local foods, a seed-planting class in the school garden, after-school programs that teach how to cook an easy meal, and field trips to local farms. These are common elements of a Farm to School Program. It allows schools to grow their nutritional programming and support local agriculture at the same time.

Community Commercial Kitchen: Picture a kitchen where a food start-up prepares their products for the farmers' market, volunteers cook up healthy meals for a community dinner, or a cooking class takes place. These kitchens can help build economic opportunity, environmental sustainability, and community health. Health and safety requirements are met for food produced for sale, the amount of locally grown and processed food is increased, and previously unavailable economic and social opportunities abound for local organizations.

Food Hub: Envision a space where locally produced foods are collected, stored, processed, and distributed. The possibilities for food hubs are endless. They can facilitate buying relationships between farmers and institutions, coordinate new markets for producers, and provide a permanent infrastructure for local foods sold under a shared label.

Curbside Composting: Visualize a bin on your curb filled with weeds, grass, leaves, tea bags, coffee, eggshells, fruit, and vegetables. Curbside composting provides an easy way for everyone to compost and reduce food waste in landfills.

How can I get involved?

Food Security Assessment Team: This group meets regularly to brainstorm and plan. They shape the Community Food Assessment, determine goals, invite participants at various stages, collect data and ultimately support the implementation and evaluation of items indicated by the assessment.

Advisory Team: This group is committed to a specific task, reviews assessment methodologies, connects with community members or organizations, and weighs in on other tasks related to their skill set and sector.

Join us!

The Food Security Assessment Team and Advisory Team are groups that represent diverse community interests. Participants will be selected based on the sectors they represent.

- If you are interested in becoming a part of the Community Food Assessment, complete and return the attached Sign Up sheet or contact Emily Slike at eslike@thehungercoalition.org, 208-721-4884.
- For more information, visit our Community Food Assessment page on our website and sign up there!



Why a food assessment?

A food assessment will give our community a clear picture of our food environment, food policies and food programs. This overview will help us identify areas where we can improve access, availability, and affordability of food, which directly links to the overall health of our local economy, citizens, visitors, and the environment.

Impact on Education

Childhood development is heavily impacted by nutrition. The long-term effects of malnutrition and poor nutrition in children include physical, mental and emotional developmental and behavioral problems, a decreased ability to learn and perform well in school, and increased frequency of disciplinary issues. It is proven that children with healthy diets learn better, test better and have fewer behavioral problems. Our schools are one venue in which healthy life-long habits about food and eating can be taught. Food-related school programming - school gardens, cooking classes - help children connect with their food.



Impact on Health

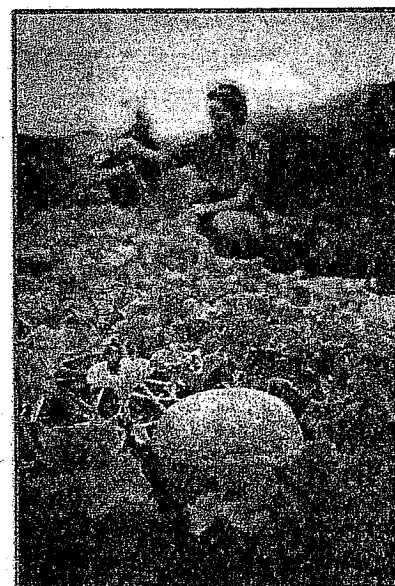
Processed and preserved, low-cost foods often have significantly reduced nutritional value. These foods are linked to weight gain and obesity, diabetes, higher rates of hypertension, cardiovascular disease, stroke, and increased doctor visits and hospitalizations. Better access to healthy, fresh and local foods at an affordable price lead to a healthier community and a reduction in health care costs.

Impact on Economy

A community food assessment often evaluates all components of a food system, including existing and potential businesses and local food infrastructure. It can highlight economic development opportunities (e.g., local value-added food processing facilities) that create jobs, reduce food-related transportation costs, and keep more money in the community.

Impact on Local Food Sources

A healthy local food system will have major impacts on the local food sources in our community. It will provide more opportunities for direct marketing, foods in local institutions and community supported agriculture. A sustainable community food system means food is grown, processed and distributed regionally with a strong emphasis on environmental integrity, economic self-reliance and social well-being.



Photos courtesy of Dev Khalsa