

WHATCOM FOOD NETWORK FORUM

OCTOBER 17, 2011 – SESSION 2

SUMMARY REPORT

BACKGROUND

The Whatcom Food Network, formed in 2010, was initiated for the purpose of bringing together the many food system-related organizations, agencies, private sector groups and institutions that play key roles in the local food system. Inspired by emerging food systems initiatives across the nation to increase coordination among Whatcom County food systems partners, a group of key stakeholders agreed to collaborate by forming the Whatcom Food Network Planning Committee. Committee members represent the many groups that are working toward improving the food system in Whatcom County by building partnerships to create a more just and coordinated food system.



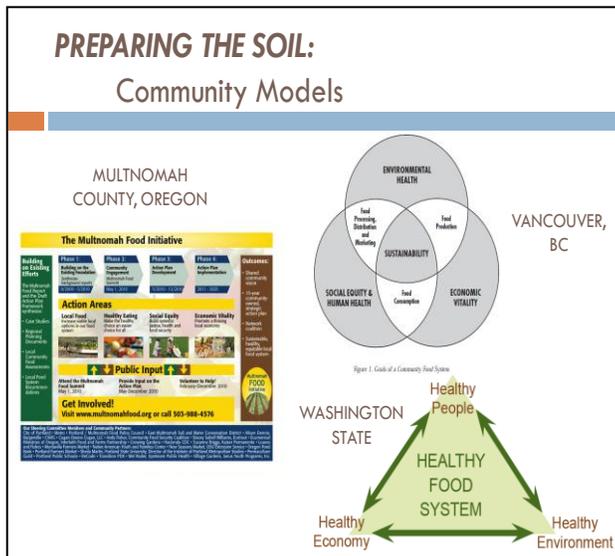
The group's purpose is:
Working to build common understanding and facilitate collaborative efforts toward an equitable, sustainable and healthy food system for all.

[Whatcom Food Network Planning Committee](#)

In May, 2011 the Planning Committee hosted its first public event, the Whatcom Food Network Forum, which was attended by 62 partners from 35 different food systems organizations throughout the county. Coming out of this event, the Planning Committee reviewed the feedback provided by forum participants and continued to glean useful and applicable ideas from food systems models and networks in other communities. The structure and function of the Whatcom Food Network continued to evolve as planning for Forum Session 2 commenced.

[Forum 1 Summary Report](#)

<http://whatcom.wsu.edu/ag/foodnetwork/>



In the weeks leading up to Forum Session 2, Planning Committee members critically examined and refined the stated Network purpose, internal functions, values, and action areas of partner organizations. A Goal Group subcommittee formed to synthesize the pieces into a cohesive document that represented member organizations and forum feedback in addition to elements of other food systems networks. The resulting documents and model represents the months of Planning Committee activity between Forum Sessions 1 and 2. The proposed community action areas, goals, and strategies were presented at the Whatcom Food Network Forum Session 2 on October 17, 2011.

Whatcom Food Network PROPOSED PURPOSE, FUNCTIONS, BELIEFS, ACTION AREAS, GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Network Purpose

The Whatcom Food Network is working to build common understanding and facilitate collaborative efforts toward an equitable, sustainable and healthy food system for all.

Internal Functions of the Whatcom Food Network:

1. Understand common goals within Whatcom County's food system.
2. Increase communication to identify overlaps and opportunities among food system-related organizations, agencies, and institutions.
3. Develop and share leadership skills to build community capacity.
4. Create partnerships, collaborative teams and opportunities to leverage resources and create mutual support.
5. Integrate organizational work to address system-wide barriers and gaps.
6. Fulfill organizational, institutional, or greater missions and goals through a more coordinated food system.
7. Create indicators and benchmarks that allow measurement of the network's collective progress.

WHATCOM FOOD NETWORK MODEL

- Food System Stages
- Proposed Network Goals
- Network Focus Areas
- Network Purpose



Network Belief Statements

Equity: *Building systematic justice, health and food security for all citizens by ensuring fresh, healthy and locally/sustainably grown foods are available in every community.*

Health: *Enhancing personal and community health through a strong local food system that provides citizens with optimal nutrition and a greater connection to their food, the farms, and the land.*

Sustainability: *Creating a local food system that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.*

Collaboration & Participation: *Building a diverse, participatory food system in cooperation with citizens, businesses, organizations and government.*

Social Justice: *Advocating for food as a basic right and emphasizing the need of all citizens for accessible, affordable, healthy, and culturally appropriate food.*

Environmental Stewardship: *Protecting and enhancing the agricultural land base and encouraging sustainable resource stewardship and farming practices.*

Thriving Economy: *Developing a regional food economy and infrastructure that creates local jobs and long-term economic viability within the food system.*

Celebration: *Promoting the fundamental importance of food in bringing people together for celebration and sharing.*

Whatcom Food Network Proposed Community Action Areas, Goals, and Strategies

SOCIAL JUSTICE

GOAL 1: Create opportunity and justice for farm and food workers and their families (Forum 1 Theme)

- Advocate to uphold quality of life for food system workers

GOAL 2: Increase consumption of and equitable access to local healthy food (Forum 1 Theme)

- Address barriers and gaps in access to healthy food
- Incorporate access to healthy food within community planning
- Implement worksite and school healthy food policies

GOAL 3: Support food sovereignty—Foster the right of all people to healthy and culturally appropriate food

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

GOAL 4: Secure an abundance of healthy and available land (Forum 1 Theme)

- Promote appropriate scale farm activities in urban and rural areas
- Enhance school and community gardens

GOAL 5: Secure an abundance of clean water for people, farms and fish

GOAL 6: Promote pro-active environmental stewardship

- Food waste reduction and reuse

THRIVING ECONOMY

GOAL 7: Develop and market strong regional food infrastructure

- Strengthen food distribution networks (Forum 1 Theme)
- Establish community food hub
- Promote local producers and products
- Develop community kitchens

GOAL 8: Promote job growth in the local food system

- Support a diverse food system workforce

GOAL 9: Encourage institutional procurement that supports the local food system

- Adopt a risk-based and tiered protocol for food safety
- Promote and ensure food safety in institutional purchasing

COLLABORATION & PARTICIPATION

GOAL 10: Facilitate community dialogue and decision-making

- Include food system issues in community planning and development
- Establish Food Policy Council

GOAL 11: Increase community resilience

- Emergency and disaster preparedness

GOAL 12: Leverage regional strength to access resources and raise awareness

- Support access to capital (grants and loans)
- Volunteers
- Collaborate and promote network efforts and initiatives
- Celebrate the achievements of the food system and the delight of food

FORUM SESSION 2

47 people representing 35 food-related organizations participated in Forum 2, which was held on a sunny fall day in the Squalicum Boathouse at Zuanich Point Park. For a list of attendees, see Appendix A.

FORUM SPONSORS

Bellingham Food Bank
Community to Community Development
Community Food Co-op
St. Lukes Foundation
Sustainable Connections
Sustainable Whatcom Fund of the Whatcom Community Foundation
WSU Whatcom County Extension
Whatcom County Health Department
Whatcom County Planning Department
Whatcom Farm-to-School Support Team

WELCOME TO THE
**WHATCOM FOOD
NETWORK FORUM**
SESSION TWO

Whatcom Food Network slides from Laurie Brockmann 10162011.pptx
Monday, October 17th, 2011, 1:00 – 4:00 pm

FORUM AGENDA

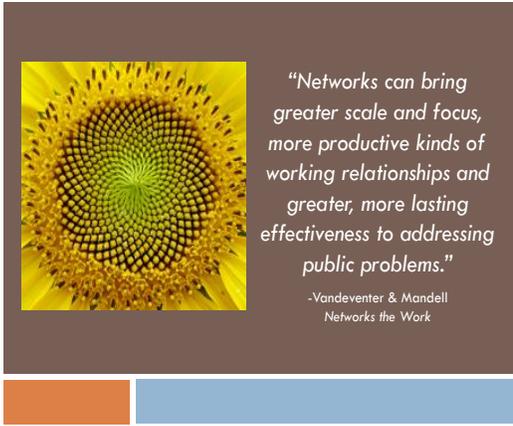
Welcome	Background	1:00-1:10
Preparing the Soil	Summary of Forum I	1:10-1:20
Plan the Fields	Network Functions & Model	1:20-1:35
Plant the Seeds	Defining End Results	1:35-2:05
Keynote Presentation	Oran Hesterman	2:05-2:30
Break	Book-signing opportunity	2:30-2:50
Pollinate	Tour the “Fields”	2:50-3:00
Weed & Water	Identifying Strategies	3:00-3:45
Harvest	Next Steps	3:45-4:00
Plant Cover Crops	Networking Social	4:00-5:00

1. WELCOME AND BACKGROUND—Forum Goals

Facilitator Laurie Brockman gave a warm welcome to the group, including introductions of Planning Committee members. She then provided background information on the planning process and goals for the forum.

The Goals of Forum Session 2 were to:

1. Build upon momentum gained in the first forum.
2. Share and add to planning committee efforts around Network goals—imagine outcomes, develop action plans, strategies and partners, and identify leadership.
3. Spark mutual inspiration—continue collaborating and integrating our work to take action toward a more equitable, sustainable and healthy food system.



2. PREPARING THE SOIL—Summary of Forum 1

Mardi Solomon from the Whatcom Farm to School team provided a concise summary of Forum 1, showing slides of activities from the day.



PREPARING THE SOIL: Mapping the food system

The collage features several hand-drawn diagrams and a photograph. The diagrams include: a circular flow chart with various nodes and arrows; a plant with a central stem labeled 'DISTRIBUTION' and 'WASTE', and roots labeled 'PRODU'; a flow chart with 'RESEARCH' and 'CULTURE' labels; and a circular diagram with 'LAND' and 'WATER' labels. The photograph shows a group of people gathered around a table, working on a large map or diagram.

3. PLAN THE FIELDS—Network Functions and Model

Nicole Willis from Whatcom County Health Department unveiled the recently created Whatcom Food Network Model. Beautifully styled and colored, the model incorporates the four Network Action Areas surrounded by proposed goals and strategies.

WHATCOM FOOD NETWORK MODEL

- Food System Stages
- Proposed Network Goals
- Network Focus Areas
- Network Purpose



4. PLANT THE SEEDS—Defining End Results

Participants were asked to find their assigned small groups, based on the 12 proposed goals. After brief introductions they were asked to provide input on the proposed goals and answer the following questions:

- What results do we want to achieve?
- What demonstrates success?

In addition, these “goal groups” were asked to define results for each goal that were **Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Timely (SMART)**. This activity provided participants an opportunity to more closely define what their vision of an equitable, sustainable and healthy food system would look like, with clear, measurable benchmarks for success. The following examples generated from this exercise helped create a roadmap of strategies for action toward achieving Network goals:



Creating Opportunity and Justice for Farm and Food Workers and Their Families

- A forum will be conducted for farm and food workers to voice how they define justice and opportunity, and work with them to achieve these goals
- Unions will be organized with workers who represent the full chain of food production, distribution and preparation to advocate for fair wages and conditions

Increase Equitable Access To and Consumption of Local Healthy Food

- Citizens will be informed and educated and costs reduced, so that people desire and can afford local, healthy food products
- Local supply meets need; the number of institutions who prioritize local food purchasing will increase

Support Food Sovereignty: Foster the Right of All People to Healthy and Culturally Appropriate Food

- Resources and needs of culturally/ethnically diverse citizens will be identified; access to healthy local food options that meet their needs, e.g., Double Bucks program, will be facilitated
- ‘Food deserts’ that typically exist in minority communities will be identified and remedied by strategically bringing the issue to the forefront of political dialogue

Secure an Abundance of Healthy and Available Land

- Increased use of available green space will occur by creating and/or adapting a model for using fallow land for community and food bank gardens
- Citizens will be educated about available garden opportunities and networking between groups will increase

Secure an Abundance of Clean Water for People, Farms and Fish

- Public awareness of water rights issues will be increased by creating a Water Policy Council to conduct presentations and critically examine current laws
- Policy will be created to repair the water rights system and imposes watering limitations and schedules

Promote Proactive Environmental Stewardship

- Programs and people who work to connect citizens of all ages to resources that protect and benefit the environment are supported
- Increased access to traditional first nations foods will reclaim a sophisticated, sustainable approach to food gathering, preparation and culture

Develop Strong Regional Food System Infrastructure

- Increased infrastructure for processing will extend availability of local produce for households and institutions so that local food is visible and available in many forms and locations
- Business resources such as NABC will be utilized to work toward creating infrastructure such as a central food warehouse, processing facility, community kitchen, etc.

Promote Job Growth in the Local Food System

- Local investment opportunities in the local food system will increase, thereby creating infrastructure and employment
- Types and numbers of crops grown locally for local consumption are expanded

Encourage Institutional Procurement that Supports the Local Food System

- Educated and engaged consumers and institutions will demand local products so that by 2020, 20% of food purchased in Whatcom County is locally grown
- Reduced barriers and increased incentives will ensure that buying local food is easy for households and institutions

Facilitate Community Dialogue and Decision-Making

- Increased interaction, coordination and collaboration between members of the Whatcom Food Network and stakeholders both here and in other communities will take place regularly
- A Food Policy Council will be created to ensure that food issues are integrated into all community planning, and to link food systems issues to jobs and economic opportunities

Increase Community Resilience

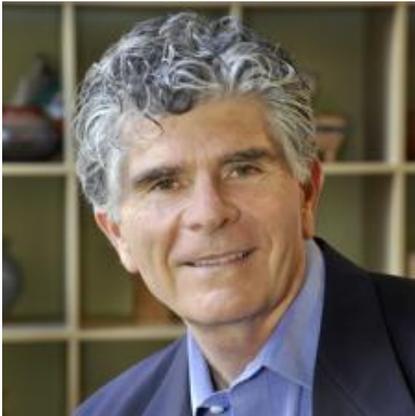
- Communities are prepared for natural and/or man-made disruptions in food supply by decreasing dependence on food from outside Whatcom County
- Restored cultural awareness and traditions of food gathering, cultivation and preservation will eliminate the disconnect between a resource-rich environment and access to healthy foods

Leverage Regional Strengths to Access Resources and Raise Awareness

- Diverse constituencies will be engaged in Whatcom Food Network efforts to cross-pollinate ideas, engagement, purchasing, etc.
- Collaboration with similar organizations regionally will maximize efforts

5. KEYNOTE PRESENTATION—Dr. Oran Hesterman

Our Keynote Speaker for Forum Session 2 was Dr. Oran Hesterman, a national leader in sustainable agriculture and food systems and author of the new book Fair Food: Growing a Healthy, Sustainable Food System for All. Dr. Hesterman founded the Fair Food Network and was the inaugural president of



Fair Food Foundation, leading their sustainable food systems programs. He also played an essential role in the establishment of the Michigan Food Policy Council and has made significant contributions to the funding of healthy food and farming via his leadership of the Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems Funders group. Dr. Hesterman's presentation focused on inspirational examples of Fair Food Network community-level programs that have contributed to food equity. One such project is *Double up Food Bucks* in Michigan, which provides Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients with the means to purchase more Michigan-grown fruits and vegetables at farmers markets while supporting local food growers and the local food economy. Reading excerpts from his new book while providing insightful

and relevant examples from his own community organizing experience, Dr. Hesterman provided forum participants with metaphorical seeds and tools in the form of ideas and inspiration, to continue building Whatcom County's own Food Network. Following his presentation, Dr. Hesterman signed copies of his book and answered questions posed by inspired participants.

6. POLLINATE—Tour the Fields

During this portion of the forum, participants got moving to 'tour the fields', viewing goals and end results suggested in the first small group activity. This gave folks an opportunity to provide input and on goals that they hadn't had a chance to contribute to directly.



7. WEED AND WATER—Identifying Strategies

For this activity participants re-grouped according to their interests in identifying specific strategies that would contribute to successfully attaining goals from the previous small group exercise. Following brief introductions and an opportunity to provide more input on goals and results, participants brainstormed strategies for their chosen goal:

- How do we achieve our intended results?
- What strategies and action steps do we plan to get us to our goal?
- What partners, stakeholders, existing efforts and potential leaders can we identify to facilitate achievement of this goal?



This activity generated pages of activities, strategies, action steps and outcomes in addition to discussion on existing efforts and potential partners, stakeholders and leaders correlated with each goal. Specific activities suggested by forum participants are listed by topic, including research projects, policy/advocacy, events, community education, coordination, collaboration and networking, and other actions (see Appendix B for a list of activities).



In addition, forum participants posed questions and expressed interest in increasing their own and the general public's knowledge and awareness about food-related issues within Whatcom County (for a list of questions see Appendix C). Results of this exercise clearly show that Whatcom Food Network partners have a vision of the equitable, sustainable and healthy food system they would like to help create, as well as a desire to increase their capacity to do so.

8. HARVEST—Next Steps

In the weeks following Forum 2, Planning Committee members worked to compile the information generated by aligning the suggested strategies, action steps and outcomes to the goals with which they best fit. To continue moving forward as a Network, planning is underway for a day of Work Sessions, one for each Action Area: Social Justice, Environmental Stewardship, Thriving Economy, and Participation and Collaboration. At these Work Sessions, to be held in early 2012, we will use an assets-based approach to:

1. Determine action steps and desired outcomes for each Action Area
2. Enhance and emulate projects and strategies that are currently successful
3. Synthesize a plan to collectively advance strategies for achieving food systems goals
4. Define how the Food Network can best be utilized

With input from key informants, planning committee members, and organizations working on local food systems issues, we will frame our plans around the Network's Internal Functions to move forward on creating a more equitable, sustainable and healthy food system.



In closing, consider the wisdom of food activist and author Michael Pollan: “The wonderful thing about food is you get three votes a day. Every one of them has the potential to change the world. That’s an amazing power that we have, and we all have it.” Spread the word.

APPENDIX A: *Organizations Represented at the Whatcom Food Network Forum 2, October 2011*

- Bellingham Farmers Market
- Bellingham Food Bank
- Blue Heron Farm
- Celt's Gardens
- Center for Local Self Reliance
- City of Bellingham Council
- Cloud Mountain Farm Center
- Common Threads Farm
- Community Food Co-op
- Community to Community Development
- Crossroads Consulting
- EarthCare Garden Designs
- Ferndale Double Dome
- Forest Garden/Center for Expressive Arts
- Futurewise Whatcom
- Kulshan Community Land Trust
- Local Food Works
- Lummi Nation Service Organization
- Maple Alley Inn
- Neighbors in Need Food Bank
- Northwest Agriculture Business Center
- Northwest Indian College
- Opportunity Council
- Puget Sound Food Network
- Resilient Farms Project, Huxley College
- Skagit County Democrats
- Slow Food Fourth Corner
- Sustainable Connections
- United Food and Commercial Workers Union 21
- Washington Department of Ecology
- Washington State Department of Agriculture
- Whatcom Community Foundation
- Whatcom Community Television and Communications
- Whatcom County Council
- Whatcom County Council on Aging
- Whatcom County Health Department
- Whatcom County Planning and Development Services
- Whatcom County Public Works
- Whatcom Farm-to-School Support Team
- WSU Food \$ense
- WSU Whatcom County Extension

APPENDIX B: *Proposed Activities from Whatcom Food Network Forum 2, October 2011*

Research Projects

- Use a survey to quantify data about farm and food workers; use this process to engage workers and use results to educate the community on issues/needs: housing, food, employment skills, etc.
- Investigate if farm workers can organize legally in WA and Whatcom.
- Determine current % of purchasing that is local.
- Develop a pilot project in the foothills to hear community needs/wants/priorities from residents (possible project partners: Crossroads Grocery, Local Food Works, Maple Falls Community Garden, East County Resource Center, places of worship).
- Survey local shoppers to see if their cultural needs are being met.
- Review urban maps to find available green spaces that might be used for family/community gardens.
- Identify current mapping and research viability, security, liability issues and determine best use of land.
- Analyze steps needed to allow individuals to farm on available farmland (liability issues?).
- Research leasehold and water rights issues.
- Research developing Whatcom group similar to Skagitonians for Farmland Preservation, King County group, and others.
- Identify key players and partnership groups—WA Farm Friends, Sustainable Connections.
- Conduct a community survey to show a change in attitudes, values and actions, e.g., increased consumption of local food.
- Research and emulate successful efforts to develop food system infrastructure such as Port Susan, La Manzanita, food processing facilities, Skagit Wholesale Market.
- Form a group by mid-2012 to create a survey of local producers and others who might utilize these facilities).
- Use survey data to write a needs assessment.
- Conduct a demographic analysis of the WFN. Identify folks missing.
- Organize celebrations/festivals in communities to spread the word. Showcase cultural foods and local growers, traditional foods, backyard gardeners, etc.
- Document alignment of common activities/efforts/interests (letters of support, national & local funding).

Policy/Advocacy

- Child labor laws will create opportunities for local youth to positively engage in farm work in the summer and after school to learn hands-on about our local food system.
- Advocate for mandatory paid sick days and a county ordinance for living wage jobs for all.
- Obtain adequate funding for food security programs and resources (e.g., Food Bank, Meals on Wheels, School nutrition services) to provide healthy and appropriate food.
- Create awareness of food deserts by actively and strategically bringing the issue into the forefront of the political dialogue.
- A Whatcom County Water Policy will fix the water rights system with required watering schedules and limitations.
- Farmland is protected from development.
 - Emphasize the importance of zoning.
 - Establish zoning for urban farms.
- Propose/pass ordinances and initiatives to protect farmlands from contamination and/or development: easements, PDA, Heritage, Economic viability.

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- Barriers to land and water are removed to increase access to traditional foods.
- Allow traditionally gathered foods into kitchens and markets—farmers markets.
- Effective food/farm/water/nutrition policy is established
- Establish policy requiring a certain percentage of institutional purchases be local.
- Government food policies are in place that increase access to healthy food.
 - Collaborate on a regional strategy for 2012-13 Farm Bill.
- A Food Policy Council will be authorized and exist at state and local levels of government.
- Food access needs will be integrated into all community planning.

Events

- Provide a forum for farm and food workers to voice how they define justice and opportunity and work with them to achieve those.
- Raise awareness about food sovereignty issues within the community -- host a cultural food fair?

Community Education

- Publish a regularly updated source of education on what local foods are available seasonally.
- Have experts give 2-hour public presentations on water and food, including 30-45 minutes for questions (suggested presenters: Jon Hutchings; Ecology; Henry; Steve Jilk; Derek Pell at State Department of Health).
- Educate people with available garden spaces who need help getting started—mentor programs, WSU Extension.
- Proactive nutrition education is accessible to those who need it the most, especially children.
- Revive cultural and institutional memory—elders “remembering what I almost forgot,”
- Cultural awareness and traditional ways of knowing how to cultivate and preserve food will be restored on individual and organizational levels.
- Education, skills, and knowledge will be shared.
- Provide public education/training – create a new social norm for eating local and broaden the conversation at the community level. (Sustainable Connections is doing this)
- Encourage people to eat more fruits and vegetables and eat seasonally.
- Educate and engage consumers, including eaters and institutions, in demanding local product.
- Educate institutions to create menus that are seasonal. (United General Hospital’s Food Service Dir. does this very well.)
- Increase awareness of cultural food programs.

Coordination, Collaboration, Networking

- Organize unions: retail, food processing, restaurant, farm, transport, warehouse, etc. Look at the full chain of workers.
- Encourage mutual education and partnerships between organizations that have an underserved constituency.
- Facilitate networking between food service providers.
 - Active cross-pollination/referral of volunteers (newsletter, Volunteer Center).
- Broaden the WFN to include more diverse groups in our county and community.
- Establish Whatcom County Farmland Preservation/Trust Fund.
 - Research developing Whatcom group similar to Skagitonians for Farmland Preservation, King County group, and others.
 - Identify key players and partnership groups—WA Farm Friends, Sustainable Connections.

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- Organizations effectively collaborate to make 20 by 20 possible.
 - Develop a supportive coalition to identify barriers, create dialogue about creative ways to get around those barriers, using WFN strengths and partnerships.
- Food access needs will be integrated into all community planning.
 - Develop an ongoing community of support to advocate, gather, and inspire.
- Engage diverse constituencies in WFN
 - Include and welcome new programs/communities.
 - Conduct a demographic analysis of the WFN. Identify folks missing.
 - Identify representatives for communities.
 - Create linkages between organizations that serve same/similar communities.
- Increase interaction, coordination, collaboration between WFN members.
 - Use the organizational chart with contact information.
 - Document alignment of common activities/efforts/interests (letters of support, national & local funding).
 - Create cross-partner incentives for education, purchasing, engagement.
 - Share curricula.
- Increase interaction between WFN and linked efforts in other communities (state, national)
 - Show support for other communities' efforts.
 - Learn from and adapt successful models from other communities.
 - Share WFN models and successes with other communities.

Other Actions

- Create anonymous help/complaint line locally.
- Increase affordable housing.
- Move toward ownership of farmland (by farm workers?).
- Work on reducing the cost of local products (too expensive for many).
- Increase infrastructure for processing to extend availability of local produce.
- Increase local employment opportunities within the food system to reduce poverty.
- Work with schools/institutions to include more culturally varied meals.
- Create a program like Double Bucks.
- Apply for Community Transformation grants.
- Encourage markets to adjust certain mark-ups/margins on local and healthy products.
- Combine physical, recreation, sport, youth activity programs with healthy, representative foods.
- Increase use of available green spaces for family/community gardens.
- Create/adapt a model for using fallow neighborhood land—include work of Kulshan Community Land Trust and Whatcom Land Trust.
- Decrease the number of cars on the road.
- Establish zero waste composting in all Whatcom County institutions.
- Install vegetative buffers around streams to benefit and sustain native fish populations.
- Create opportunities for elders and youth to be connected around food.
- Work to decrease air pollutants.
- Recognition/awards for those who support environmental stewardship (ReSources already does this)
- Ensure an organization exists to take on staffing, food safety, access, communication, and scheduling, other logistics of a food hub or commercial kitchen.
- Utilize or create “toolkits” for successful models (wholesale markets, processing facilities, institutional purchasing, etc.)

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- A regional system exists – specific growers contracting to grow specific crops to meet market needs (farm-to-school, other institutions, etc.).
- Local food is visible, processed, and available in many locations (e.g., fresh, canned, and frozen food from Whatcom County would be in a number of local groceries.)
- Increase people’s local food purchases.
- Facilitate Food Service Directors working with farmers.
- Expand crops grown.
- A food hub and processing facility will be available for local processing and distribution.
- Clarify the relationship between local and regional food production and consumption.
- Work with regional/national distributor (e.g., FSA) to give preference to local product.
- Identify impact of very easy manageable changes institutions could make – calculate multiplier effects of simple local purchases.
- Have a local distributor that delivers affordable local product.
- Decrease dependence on food from outside Whatcom County.
- Increase diversity and availability of local foods.

APPENDIX C: Questions Generated During the Whatcom Food Network Forum 2, October 2011

LAND AND WATER:

- How many acres of farmland do we have in Whatcom County?
- How much farmland would be needed to feed all the people of Whatcom County?
- How much farmland is adequately protected from the risk of development?
- What percentage of the streams in Whatcom County are adequately protected and restored for water quality and fish recovery?

LABOR:

- How many farm workers are living in Whatcom County?
- What kind of work do farm workers in Whatcom County do?
- What is the average income of a Whatcom County farm worker?
- How many woodworkers are living in Whatcom County?
- What kind of work do food workers in Whatcom County do?
- What is the average income of a Whatcom County farm worker?

FARMERS AND FISHERS:

- How many farmers do we have in Whatcom County?
- How much income is generated from agriculture in Whatcom County?
- How many jobs are in fisheries in Whatcom County?
- How much income is generated from fisheries in Whatcom County?

PROCESSING:

- What kinds of foods are processed in Whatcom County?
- How many jobs are in food processing in Whatcom County?
- How much income is generated from food processing in Whatcom County?

DISTRIBUTION:

- How many people go hungry in Whatcom County each month?
- How many people visit Whatcom County Food banks each month?
- How many days of food are available in Whatcom County in case of a disaster that prevents importing food?

CONSUMPTION:

- What foods are locally grown in Whatcom County?
- What foods are processed in Whatcom County?
- When are locally grown fruits and vegetables available?
- How many species of seafood are available locally?
- How much food is grown in Whatcom County?
- How much of the food grown in Whatcom County is purchased in Whatcom County?
- What percentage of the population in Whatcom County wish they could purchase more local food?
- How much, and what types of foods used traditionally by Lummi and Nooksack people are still being consumed today?

- What percentage of Whatcom County residents eats the amount of fruits and vegetables necessary for good health?
- What percentage of Whatcom County residents are overweight or obese?
- What percentage of Whatcom County residents has diabetes?

WASTE:

- How much garbage is generated daily in Whatcom County?
- How much garbage could be generated if the Towards Zero Waste program were implemented fully?
- How much food waste could be composted? How much is composted?
- What is a food mile?
- What is the estimated average food mile in a school lunch?
- What is the estimated average food mile in the diet of a Whatcom County resident?