



Whatcom
Food
Network

for a healthy, just & thriving food system



WFN Steering Committee Orientation Binder

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Who is the Whatcom Food Network?

The Whatcom Food Network is composed of the many organizations, agencies, and institutions playing a key role in strengthening the local and regional food system. Working in concert and as equal partners, Network Members aim to understand system-wide issues, while relying on the success of each organization to play their part.

What is the Purpose of the Network?

1. Increase communication, coordination, and collaboration among food system-related organizations, agencies, and institutions.
2. Gain a collective understanding of the barriers and gaps in Whatcom County's food system and develop common goals for addressing them.
3. Build community capacity through education, leveraging resources, and mutual support.
4. Work inclusively with the diverse communities of our region to ensure lasting success.





All Whatcom Food Network partner organizations support these core values

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

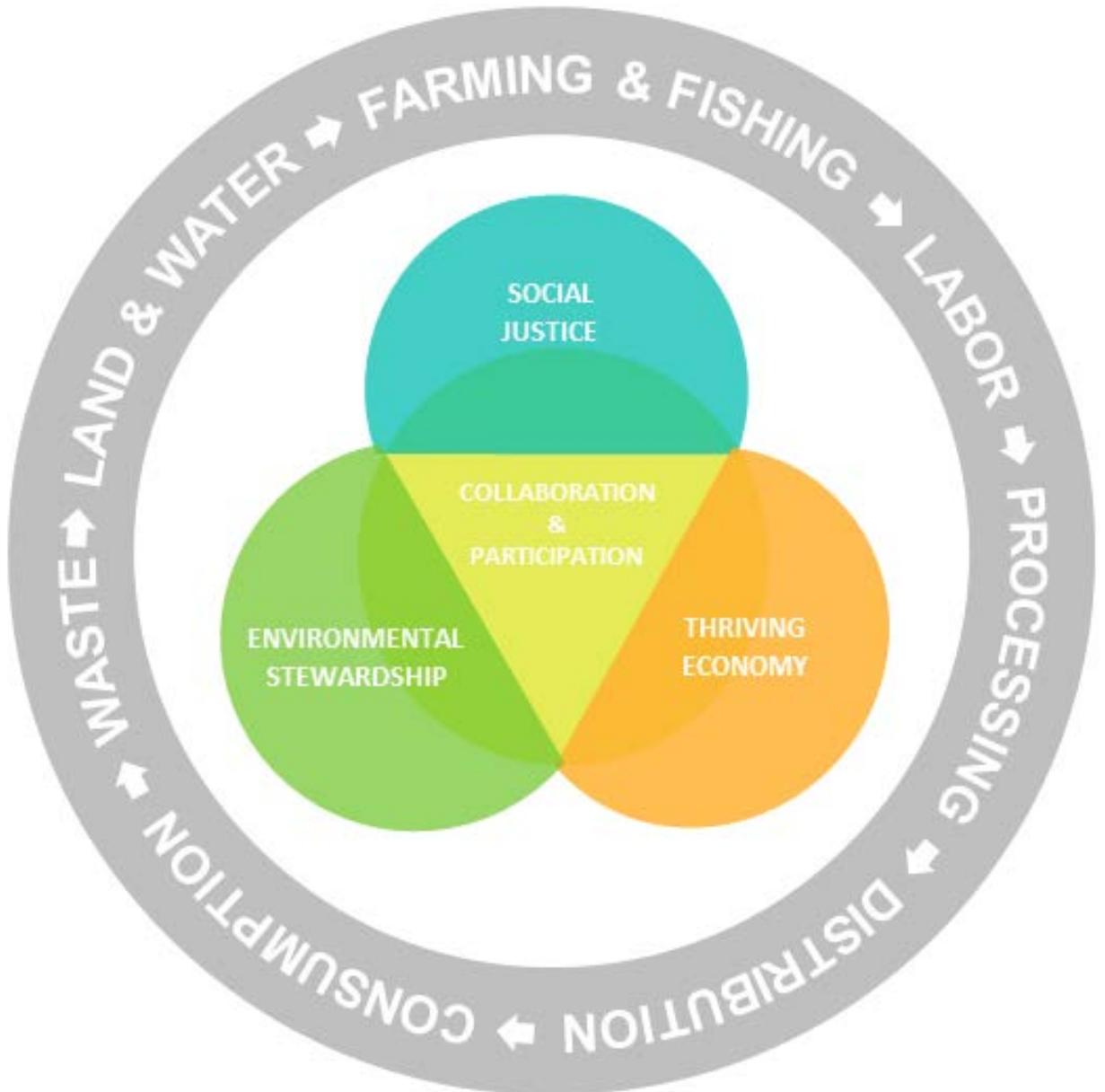
Promoting the fundamental importance of food in bringing people together for celebration and sharing.



Whatcom Food Network Model

OUR FOOD SYSTEM

The outer ring represents the different sectors that are a part of the food system. Inside the circle, the multicolor diagram represent the core elements of a healthy food system.



**WSU Whatcom County Extension
Community Food Assessment**

Food System Organizations

Organizations working to improve the food system in Whatcom County

To help us understand the food system and develop strategies for improving it, the WFN defined nine overlapping “sectors” that flow from our land and water through a chain of people and processes, and back again.

Land

These organizations work on issues such as preserving land for farming, developing plans and policies on land-use, and maintaining the quality of soil resources in Whatcom County.

Technical Support	Education	Advocacy
	<u>Futurewise</u>	
	<u>WSU Whatcom County Extension</u>	
	<u>Whatcom Conservation District</u>	
		<u>Whatcom Agricultural Advisory Committee</u>
<u>Whatcom County Planning and Development Services</u>		<u>Whatcom County Planning and Development Services</u>
		<u>Whatcom Farm Friends</u>

Technical Support: Providing direct training, tools and assistance linking with resources.

Education: Providing information and promoting awareness to target audiences or the community at large.

Advocacy: Developing or influencing policy, regulations, or legislation.

Water

These organizations work on issues related to water quantity and quality for farming and fishing.

Technical Support	Education	Advocacy
	<u>City of Bellingham</u>	
	<u>Lake Whatcom Management Program</u>	
	<u>Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association</u>	
	<u>Puget Sound Partnership</u>	
	<u>RE Sources for Sustainable Communities</u>	
	<u>Shellfish Protection Districts</u>	
	<u>Washington Department of Ecology</u>	
	<u>Washington Sea Grant</u>	
	<u>WSU Whatcom County Extension</u>	
	<u>Whatcom Conservation District</u>	
<u>Whatcom County Planning and Development Services</u>		<u>Whatcom County Planning and Development Services</u>
		<u>Whatcom Farm Friends</u>
		<u>Whatcom Marine Resources Committee</u>
	<u>Whatcom Water Alliance</u>	
	<u>WRIA 1 Watershed Management Program</u>	
	<u>WRIA 1 Salmon Recovery Program</u>	

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Farming

These organizations are working to mentor new farmers, and help farmers become more financially and/or environmentally sustainable.

Technical Support	Education	Advocacy
	<u>A Rocha USA</u>	
	<u>Cloud Mountain Farm Center</u>	
		<u>Community Food Co-op</u>
	<u>Growing Veterans</u>	
<u>Growing Washington</u>		
	<u>Sustainable Connections</u>	
	<u>Washington Blueberry Commission</u>	
		<u>Washington Dairy Federation</u>
	<u>Washington Red Raspberry Commission</u>	
	<u>Washington Seed Potato Commission</u>	
	<u>Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA)</u>	
	<u>WSU Whatcom County Extension</u>	
	<u>Whatcom Conservation District</u>	
		<u>Whatcom Farm Friends</u>

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Fishing

These organizations are working to protect and enhance the fisheries industry in Whatcom County.

Technical Support	Education	Advocacy
	<u>Lummi Nation</u>	
	<u>Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association</u>	
	<u>Nooksack Tribe</u>	
	<u>Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife</u>	
	<u>Washington Sea Grant</u>	
	<u>WRIA 1 Salmon Recovery Program</u>	

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Labor

These organizations are working towards better conditions for foodworkers, farmworkers and assuring sufficient farm labor for local farms.

Technical Support	Education	Advocacy
<u>Community to Community Development</u>		
<u>Office of Rural & Farmworker Housing</u>		<u>Office of Rural & Farmworker Housing</u>
	<u>United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW Local 21)</u>	
		<u>Whatcom Farm Friends</u>

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Advocacy: Developing or influencing policy, regulations, or legislation.

Waste

These organizations are working to reduce the amount of waste in the food system and find alternative uses and recycling opportunities.

Technical Support	Education	Advocacy
<u>Bellingham Public Works</u>		
<u>RE Sources for Sustainable Communities</u>		
<u>Sustainable Connections</u>		
<u>Whatcom County Public Works: Toxics</u>		<u>Whatcom County Public Works: Toxics</u>

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Processing

These organizations are working to help increase the food processing capacity in Whatcom County and support development of value-added products.

Technical Support	Education	Advocacy
<u>Cloud Mountain Farm Center</u>		
<u>Northwest Agriculture Business Center</u>		
<u>Washington State Dept. of Agriculture (WSDA)</u>		
<u>WSU Whatcom County Extension</u>		
<u>Whatcom County Health Department</u>		<u>Whatcom County Health Department</u>

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Advocacy: Developing or influencing policy, regulations, or legislation.

Distribution

These organizations are working on facilitating the movement of food from local farms to outlets where it can be made available to consumers.

Technical Support	Education	Advocacy
<u>Cloud Mountain Farm Center</u>		
<u>Growing Washington</u>		
<u>Northwest Agriculture Business Center</u>		
<u>Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA)</u>		
<u>Whatcom Farm-to-School Support Team</u>		
Hunger Relief		
<u>Bellingham Food Bank</u>		
	<u>Lummi Nation Service Organization</u>	
<u>Nooksack Indian Tribe Planning</u>		
<u>Opportunity Council: Head Start</u>		
<u>Whatcom Council on Aging: Meals on Wheels</u>		

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Advocacy: Developing or influencing policy, regulations, or legislation.

Consumption

These organizations are working to increase access and encourage the consumption of healthy and locally grown and prepared food.

Technical Support	Education	Advocacy
Hunger Relief		
	<u>Catholic Housing Services</u>	
<u>Congregate meals sites and food pantries</u>		
<u>County Network Food Banks (Bellingham, Blaine, Ferndale, Foothills, Nooksack, Project Hope in Lynden, Salvation Army)</u>		
	<u>Opportunity Council: Food Stamp Outreach</u>	
	<u>Whatcom Anti-Hunger Coalition</u>	
	<u>Whatcom County Health Dept: WIC</u>	
Healthy Eating		
	<u>Common Threads Farm</u>	
	<u>Community Food Co-op</u>	
	<u>Farmers Markets (Bellingham, Ferndale, Blaine, Lynden)</u>	
	<u>Forest Garden Urban Ecology Center</u>	
	<u>Local Food Works</u>	
	<u>Non-GMO Project</u>	
	<u>Northwest Indian College</u>	
	<u>Sustainable Connections</u>	
	<u>Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA)</u>	
	<u>WSU Whatcom County Extension</u>	
	<u>Whatcom Council on Aging: Senior Meals</u>	
	<u>Whatcom County Health Department</u>	
	<u>Whatcom Farm-to-School Support Team</u>	

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Advocacy: Developing or influencing policy, regulations, or legislation.

Grow-Your-Own Programs:

These organizations provide resources to educate and assist people in growing, gathering, gleaning, and preserving their own food.

Technical Support	Education	Advocacy
	<u>Bellingham Food Bank</u>	
	<u>Center for Local Self-Reliance</u>	
	<u>Common Threads Farm</u>	
<u>Community and Faith-Based Gardens</u>		
<u>Forest Garden Urban Ecology Center</u>		
	<u>Local Food Works</u>	
	<u>Northwest Indian College</u>	
	<u>Transition Whatcom</u>	
	<u>WSU Whatcom County Extension</u>	

Technical Support: Providing direct training, tools and assistance linking with resources.

Education: Providing information and promoting awareness to target audiences or the community at large .

Advocacy: Developing or influencing policy, regulations, or legislation.

Media:

These organizations are working to inform the public on issues and solutions that are happening in the local food system.

Organization
<u>Bellingham Herald</u>
<u>Cascadia Weekly</u>
<u>Foothills Gazette</u>
<u>Grow Northwest Magazine</u>
<u>Lynden Tribune</u>
<u>Northwest Farms and Food</u>
Whatcom Television and Communications

Local Funders:

These organizations are providing funding to projects and programs that help improve the local food system. Funding also comes from regional and national funders.

Organization
<u>Community Food Coop</u>
<u>Chuckanut Health Foundation</u>
<u>City of Bellingham</u>
<u>Mary Redman Foundation</u>
<u>River Styx Foundation</u>
<u>Whatcom Community Foundation, Sustainable Whatcom Fund</u>

Local Entrepreneurs:

These values-based, for-profit businesses at the table, actively collaborating and contributing resources to improve the local food system for all.

Organization
<u>Acme Farms + Kitchen</u>
<u>Amy's Kitchen</u>
<u>Bellewood Acres</u>
<u>Ciao Thyme</u>
<u>Sanitary Services Company</u>
<u>Taylor Shellfish</u>



Frequently Asked Questions about the Whatcom Food Network

WHAT DOES THE WHATCOM FOOD NETWORK DO?

The Whatcom Food Network aims to increase communication, coordination, and collaboration among local and regional food system-related organizations. Through online communication tools and Network events, organizations can share information, pursue projects of mutual benefit, and develop community initiatives to strengthen the local food system.

WHAT IS A “FOOD SYSTEM”?

A food system is made up of all the interdependent people and processes that provide food to a community; this includes a cycle of producing, storing, processing, transporting, marketing, retailing, preparing, and eating food. You can learn more about our local food resources and the challenges that need to be addressed by reading the Whatcom County Community Food Assessment.

WHAT IS THE NETWORK TRYING TO ACHIEVE?

Our local and regional food system is supported by a large and diverse array of organizations, agencies, and institutions. By increasing our understanding of each other’s work and coordinating our efforts, we will be better able to strengthen our local food economy and ensure that current and future generations of Whatcom County residents have access to healthy food.

WHO IS ORGANIZING THE WHATCOM FOOD NETWORK?

A Steering Committee and Coordinating Team work to maintain the systems of the Network, on behalf of the Members. The Steering Committee is composed of 10-14 representatives of WFN member organizations, the Coordinating Team is a smaller group, which includes representatives from lead agencies.

WHY WOULD OUR ORGANIZATION JOIN THE NETWORK?

Joining the Network will help you to connect with other organizations that are working on different aspects of the food system and stay informed about initiatives that that might advance your organization’s work. It will help you forge new partnerships with groups and individuals that have related goals, and help you avoid duplication of effort. You can join the Network simply by signing a Declaration of Support.

WHAT KIND OF A TIME COMMITMENT DOES THIS MEAN?

There is no required time commitment, just a variety of opportunities. You can come to the bi-annual forums, utilize the Network listserv, participate in the Network Steering Committee or Action Groups, or simply use the contacts and resources available through the website to connect with others and pursue partnerships or projects.

IS THERE A FEE FOR BELONGING?

Currently there is no fee to join the Network. We are grateful for the funding we have received from the St. Luke’s Foundation and the Whatcom Community Foundation Sustainable Whatcom Fund, and the staff and volunteer time committed by various organizations to create and maintain the Network.

WHAT INFORMATION WILL BE LISTED ON THE WFN WEBSITE ABOUT OUR ORGANIZATION?

Member organizations will have their organization name and website address listed on the Whatcom Food Network website.

HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED, IF I DO NOT REPRESENT AN ORGANIZATION?

Individuals who would like to be involved in Network activities are welcome to attend Forums and participate in subcommittees or action groups. Sign the Declaration of Support as “an individual” – and you will be considered an *Associate* of the Network.

Glossary of Terms

Food access the ability of a person or group of people to obtain healthy food, depending on factors such as physical access, financial access, knowledge, or cultural attitudes

Food culture shared values, traditions, and customs surrounding food; food culture expresses itself within society, community, organization, school, and family

Food desert an area of low *food security*, where residents have limited or no access to healthy foods and fresh produce, and are served mainly by fast food restaurants and mini marts

Food justice an approach that advocates for fair distribution of food and that views *food security* as a basic human right

Food literacy understanding the story of one's food, from farm to table and back to the soil; the knowledge and ability to make informed choices that support one's health, community, and the environment

Food miles the distance food travels to get from farm to fork; considered in assessing the carbon emissions and environmental impact of transporting food

Food policy principles and guidelines related to production, distribution, and consumption of food

Food security availability and access to safe, nutritious food for sustaining an active and healthy life, without risk of hunger or starvation

Food sovereignty the right of people to healthy and culturally appropriate food, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems. It puts those who produce, distribute and consume food at the heart of food systems and policies rather than the demands of markets and corporations

Food system the interdependent people and processes that provide food to a community; this includes a cycle of producing, storing, processing, transporting, marketing, retailing, preparing, and eating food

Local food food grown, processed, and distributed within a certain radius (often defined as within 150 miles) of one's home

Seed to table the chain of relationships that it takes to get food to one's plate, including cultivation, transportation, distribution, and access

Slow food an international movement to preserve local food systems and traditional and regional cuisine

Social justice (as it relates to food systems) food is a basic human right and underscores the need of all citizens, and particularly hungry children, for accessible, affordable, healthy, and culturally appropriate food.

Sustainable meeting current environmental, economic, and social needs without compromising the well-being of future generations

These glossary terms are courtesy of **Nourish** (nourishlife.org), **Vancouver, BC Food Charter** (vancouver.ca) and **La Via Campesina** (viacampesina.org)

Summary of Via Campesina's "Seven Principles to Achieve Food Sovereignty"

1. **Food: A Basic Human Right.** Everyone must have access to safe, nutritious and culturally appropriate food in sufficient quantity and quality to sustain a healthy life with full human dignity. Each nation should declare that access to food is a constitutional right and guarantee the development of the primary sector to ensure the concrete realization of this fundamental right.
2. **Agrarian Reform.** A genuine agrarian reform is necessary which gives landless and farming people – especially women – ownership and control of the land they work and returns territories to indigenous peoples. The right to land must be free of discrimination on the basis of gender, religion, race, social class or ideology; the land belongs to those who work it.
3. **Protecting Natural Resources.** Food Sovereignty entails the sustainable care and use of natural resources, especially land, water, and seeds and livestock breeds. The people who work the land must have the right to practice sustainable management of natural resources and to conserve biodiversity free of restrictive intellectual property rights. This can only be done from a sound economic basis with security of tenure, healthy soils and reduced use of agro-chemicals.
4. **Reorganizing Food Trade.** Food is first and foremost a source of nutrition and only secondarily an item of trade. National agricultural policies must prioritize production for domestic consumption and food self-sufficiency. Food imports must not displace local production nor depress prices.
5. **Ending the Globalization of Hunger.** Food Sovereignty is undermined by multilateral institutions and by speculative capital. The growing control of multinational corporations over agricultural policies has been facilitated by the economic policies of multilateral organizations such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Regulation and taxation of speculative capital and a strictly enforced Code of Conduct for Multinational corporations (TNCs) is therefore needed.
6. **Social Peace.** Everyone has the right to be free from violence. Food must not be used as a weapon. Increasing levels of poverty and marginalization in the countryside, along with the growing oppression of ethnic minorities and indigenous populations, aggravate situations of injustice and hopelessness. The ongoing displacement, forced urbanization, oppression and increasing incidence of racism of smallholder farmers cannot be tolerated.
7. **Democratic control.** Smallholder farmers must have direct input into formulating agricultural policies at all levels. The United Nations and related organizations will have to undergo a process of democratization to enable this to become a reality. Everyone has the right to honest, accurate information and open and democratic decision-making. These rights form the basis of good governance, accountability and equal participation in economic, political and social life, free from all forms of discrimination. Rural women, in particular, must be granted direct and active decision-making on food and rural issues.

Source: Windfur, M. and Jonsen, J. (2005) *Food Sovereignty: Towards democracy in localized food systems*. ITDF Publishing: Bourton-on-Dunsmore, Rugby, Warwickshire, UK.

A Primer on Community Food Systems:

Linking Food, Nutrition and Agriculture

Introduction

The term "food system" is used frequently in discussions about nutrition, food, health, community economic development and agriculture. The food system includes all processes involved in keeping us fed: growing, harvesting, processing (or transforming or changing), packaging, transporting, marketing, consuming and disposing of food and food packages. It also includes the inputs needed and outputs generated at each step. The food system operates within and is influenced by social, political, economic and natural environments. Each step is also dependent on human resources that provide labor, research and education.

Community Food Systems

Several qualifying terms have been used to describe the food system: simple, complex, local, global and regional. A *community* food system is a food system in which food production, processing, distribution and consumption are integrated to enhance the environmental, economic, social and nutritional health of a particular place. A community food system can refer to a relatively small area, such as a neighborhood, or progressively larger areas – towns, cities, counties, regions, or bioregions. The concept of community food systems is sometimes used interchangeably with "local" or "regional" food systems, but by including the word "community" there is an emphasis on strengthening existing (or developing new) relationships between all components of the food system. This reflects a prescriptive approach to building a food system, one that holds sustainability – economic, environmental and social – as a long-term goal toward which a community strives.

Four aspects distinguish community food systems from the globalized food system that typifies the source of most food Americans eat: food security, proximity, self-reliance and sustainability.

- Food security is a key goal of community food systems. While food security traditionally focuses on individual and household food needs, community food security addresses food access within a community context, especially for low-income households. It has a simultaneous goal of developing local food systems.

- Proximity refers to the distance between various components of the food system. In community food systems such distances are generally shorter than those in the dominant or global food system. This proximity increases the likelihood that enduring relationships will form between different stakeholders in the food system – farmers, processors, retailers, restaurateurs, consumers, etc.
- Self-reliance refers to the degree to which a community meets its own food needs. While the aim of community food systems is not total self-sufficiency (where all food is produced, processed, marketed and consumed within a defined boundary), increasing the degree of self-reliance for food, to be determined by a community partnership, is an important aspect of a community food system.
- Sustainability refers to following agricultural and food system practices that do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their food needs. Sustainability includes environmental protection, profitability, ethical treatment of food system workers, and community development. Sustainability of the food and agriculture system is increased when a diversified agriculture exists near strong and thriving markets, when non-renewable inputs required for every step in the food system are reduced, when farming systems rely less on agri-chemical fertilization and pest control, and when citizen participation in food system decision-making is enhanced.

Goals of Community Food Systems

Building a community food system requires comprehensive or holistic approaches to meeting the food needs of people living in a particular place. Efforts to develop community food systems address multiple goals simultaneously:

- Optimized health, reduced risk of diet-related chronic diseases, and increased enjoyment of food among community members.
- Dietary change that complements the seasonal availability of foods produced and processed by the local food and agriculture system.
- Improved access for all community members to an adequate, affordable, nutritious diet.
- A stable (or in some cases, expanding) base of family farms that use integrated production practices to enhance environmental quality,
- Marketing channels and processing facilities that create more direct links between farmers and consumers, and, by shortening the distance between these partners, conserve resources needed for transporting food.
- Food and agriculture-related businesses, resulting in stronger community economies through job creation, and re-circulating financial capital in the community. Such businesses could include food processing, or value-adding processing to expand opportunities for locally produced food to be consumed locally.

- Increased public participation in food and agriculture policies that promote local food production, access to local retail and processing markets, and institutional procurement of local agricultural commodities.

Elements of Community Food Systems

There are several well-recognized elements of a community food system:

- Farmers' markets provide the opportunity for eaters to meet and talk directly with the people who grow the food they are buying. By the same token, farmers can learn more, in a direct way, about what their customers want and need to know about the food from their farms. By decreasing the amount of fuel used to move food around, this proximity to food sources increases the environmental sustainability of the system.
- Community and school gardens are recognized as an important source of fresh produce, particularly for underserved populations in low-income neighborhoods, thereby increasing dietary quality and food security. They provide spaces for community interaction, decision-making, problem-solving, creativity and celebration. Community gardens also provide opportunities to learn about food production, develop job skills, increase agriculture literacy, generate food-related businesses, and create links to nearby restaurants and soup kitchens.
- Community supported agriculture (CSA) farms are arrangements whereby a group of people buy shares into the eventual harvest of a farm before the crops are planted. In exchange for their investment into the farm, shareholders receive fresh fruits and vegetables (and sometimes, other products such as local cheeses, fresh flowers, eggs and meats), on a weekly basis throughout the harvest season. By making this investment, CSA members accept part of the financial risks associated with farming. Further, the farmer receives a portion of the cost of production at a time when it is most needed. Many CSA farmers also market through local farmers' markets, which can increase farm profitability and stability.
- U-Pick operations and roadside farm stands provide access to fresh produce direct from the farmer who grew it. Through a U-Pick, the price paid to the farmer is reduced substantially in exchange for harvest labor. In the process, eaters come in contact with farmers, experience another aspect of the food system, and increase their intake of fresh and processed local produce (if some of what they harvest is preserved through freezing or canning, for example).
- Community kitchens are facilities where locally produced, gleaned or recovered foods can be further processed or preserved for members of a community. Food product development often takes place at these

facilities, thereby creating income generating opportunities and products with local identity.

- Small-scale food processing and decentralized root cellars provide infrastructure and technical expertise necessary to launch new food-based businesses. Much of the food we eat is processed in some way and in areas with relatively short growing seasons, such as the Northeast. The use of canned, frozen and stored fruits and vegetables when produce is "out of season" is another way to develop community food systems.

Externalities

The word externality is an economic term used to describe costs or benefits generated by an agent (say a farmer, or a truck driver) that do not register as a cost or benefit to that agent or end-user. The pollution generated by transporting food is not paid for by the trucking company in the price of the fuel, or by the consumer in the price of the food. The external environmental and social costs related to food production, processing, storage, and distribution are seldom accounted for in the price we pay for food at the grocery store register. Community food systems, by narrowing the distance between producers, processors and consumers, have a greater chance of "internalizing" any externalities in the food system and actually reducing many. For example, since the distance food is transported in a community food system is shorter, less fossil fuel is burned, less pollution generated and less wear and tear on trucks and roadways results from the transportation of food. Likewise, because more of the steps in the food system are carried out locally, the loss of food system-related jobs is minimized.

Actions to Create a Community Food Systems

As individuals, consumers can do a lot to support and collectively strengthen community food systems:

- choose a diet rich in locally grown and processed foods. Regional food guides, such as the Northeast Regional Food Guide, provide guidelines to help consumers choose healthful local and seasonal diets.
- ask food stores to buy from local growers and processors.
- ask where items on restaurant menus came from and express interest in eating locally produced and processed foods.
- shop at farmers' markets and food co-ops (which are more likely to offer local, in season, and often organic choices).
- buy a share in a CSA farm or sponsor someone else's share.
- participate in a community or school garden or start a home vegetable garden and share excess with neighbors, a community kitchen or local soup kitchen.
- cook from scratch.

- support policies that favor local farms and other elements of community food systems, join or create a food policy council to assess community assets with respect to the local food system, identify areas of need, and develop strategies collectively to meet those needs.

In order to support local community food systems in their food choices, consumers need:

- access to local foods,
- ways to identify local alternatives,
- ways to learn meal planning and preparation skills,
- an understanding of seasonal variation,
- knowledge of the local food and agriculture system, and
- an appreciation of the benefits of eating seasonally and locally.

Nutrition practitioners can do a lot through their professions to support community food systems as well, such as:

- include considerations about seasonal availability of locally produced foods when providing dietary advice to clients,
- substitute non-local foods in meal plans with foods that are nutritionally equivalent and are produced locally,
- create seasonally varied institutional food service menus that reflect local agricultural production. This might include, for example, the use of root vegetables in the winter in northern climates,
- shift procurement strategies in food service operations toward local food sources, and include information about the sources of foods at the point of purchase.

Conclusion

We all can benefit from learning more about our own food system, and participating in its development. Community food systems offer an alternative to our current approach to meeting our daily food and nutrition needs and promises several social, environmental and economic benefits. As individual stakeholders, we all have a role to play in shaping the future of our community food systems.

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Organizational Structure

Working in concert and as equal partners, Network Members aim to understand system-wide issues, while relying on the success of each organization to play their part. Given the interdependence of food system goals, the Network provides value through the following structure:

- **The Network** meets twice a year at Forums where Members can make connections, build understanding, discuss shared goals, and form Subcommittee or Action Groups.
- **The Steering Committee**, composed of 10-20 representatives of WFN Member organizations, meets quarterly to monitor progress towards WFN goals, support bi-annual Network Forums, and serve as ambassadors across the food system.
- **The Coordinating Team**, composed of 3-5 members of the Steering Committee, meets monthly to facilitate and support the function of the Network. The Coordinating Team coordinates the Forums, supports the Action Groups as needed, and oversees Network communication planning and messaging. The Coordinating Team includes representatives from the two lead agencies: WSU and WCHD. The Coordinating Team represents the vision and purpose of the Network, ensures that the organization functions properly, and oversees the network coordinator.
- **The Network Coordinator** facilitates the work of the Steering Committee and Coordinating Team, carries out related action items, and maintains Network communication systems, acting as the voice of the Network with oversight from the Steering Committee and Coordinating Team.
- **Subcommittees** bring together members of the steering committee around a topic that needs further consideration or ongoing support. They may be short term or long term. Subcommittees are appointed by members of the steering committee.
- **Action Groups** bring together Network Members from across different sectors of the food system, along with additional community stakeholders, to pursue specific projects, discussions, or campaigns. The Network acts as an umbrella under which action groups can work. They decide if they are open or closed and anyone in the Network has the freedom to create an action group, granted one person is a member of the Whatcom Food Network and the group has been approved by the Coordinating Team.
- **Financial Support** for the Network is currently provided by the Whatcom Community Foundation's Sustainable Whatcom Fund Committee.



Steering Committee Member Guidelines

STEERING COMMITTEE CRITERIA

The Steering Committee should be:

- 1) Made up of 10-20 representatives of WFN member organizations, ideally with two members from each of the various sectors of the food system and WFN goal areas;
- 2) Representative of diversity within our community, including minorities and marginalized populations;
- 3) Be made up in majority by community organizations, though local businesses with a demonstrated interest in strengthening our local food system are welcome.

AND Steering Committee members should be:

- 1) Connected to the work of the Whatcom Food Network;
- 2) Community-oriented with a broad interest in food systems;
- 3) Representative of one or more of the food system sectors;
- 4) Well-connected within their sector, ideally with interactions across sectors.

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBER EXPECTATIONS

Whatcom Food Network Steering Committee Members are expected to:

- Attend at least four out of six bi-monthly meetings of the Steering Committee annually, and both of the two WFN Member Forums per year (~three-hour time commitment per month);
- Come to meetings prepared, having reviewed materials in advance of the meeting;
- Print their own meeting materials, or notify Network Coordinator if copies are needed;
- Contact the Network Coordinator in advance of the meeting if unable to attend;
- Serve as an ambassador to a sector of the food system that they are not already closely involved in (land/water, farming/fishing, labor, processing, distribution, consumption, waste), including tracking events, planning collaborative efforts, and facilitating cross-sector relationships in that sector.

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

- Honor commitments and work collaboratively with other members of the Steering Committee;
- Provide organizational resources and support whenever possible to WFN functions;
- Maintain a broad focus on the purpose of the WFN and achievement of WFN goals;
- Monitor progress towards WFN goals and objectives—review and revise as needed;
- Help ensure that the WFN maintains a strong, diverse, and engaged member base;
- Provide input and support to plan and implement WFN Forums;
- Regularly submit information to the WFN Listserv, providing information about activities in their own organization, and from the sector area for which they are serving as an ambassador;
- Identify potential resources for supporting and funding Network functions and goals.
- Identify potential members of the Steering Committee to ensure a full and diverse slate of member representatives over time;
- Annually elect Steering Committee members to serve on the Coordinating Team;
- Serve a one-year term, with no term limit.

By signing here, I agree to the above Steering Committee Member Guidelines.

X _____



Steering Committee Meetings

Steering Committee meetings are held four times a year; meetings typically last two hours. **Steering Committee members are expected to attend three out of the four meetings.**

All Steering Committee Meetings are supported by facilitation and notetaking, as provided by the Coordinating Team.

To facilitate information sharing between meetings, Steering Committee Members use a Dropbox folder, and sign up for the Steering Committee List Serve.

A meeting reminder is sent to all members one week before a scheduled meeting, and the agenda and relevant materials are uploaded into the Dropbox for that meeting.

If a member is unable to attend a meeting, they contact the Network Assistant or the meeting facilitator in advance of the meeting.

Members agree to come to meetings prepared, having read the materials in advance. Members are responsible for printing their own meeting materials.

Decisions are made using a consensus seeking process, with a $\frac{3}{4}$ super-majority vote to approve a proposal brought forward for decision-making

Members who show up make the decisions. If a member cannot attend, they can send their opinion by email or phone proxy prior to the meeting for incorporation into the decision making process.

Members agree to follow basic guidelines for participation:

- In meetings, one person speaks at a time
- All voices are given an opportunity to be heard
- We treat each other with consideration and respect
- We avoid repeating ideas, or straying off-topic
- We look for win/win solutions when disagreements arise
- We address conflict in-person, or via telephone – never by email.
- We do not re-open previous decisions without first agreeing to do so, and putting that item on an agenda.
- We all share in the work, and keep our agreements



Steering Committee Recruitment & Retention

The Steering Committee of the WFN is composed 10-20 representatives of WFN member organizations, ideally with two members from each of the various sectors of the food system and WFN goal areas. Steering Committee Members serve a one-year term, with no term limits.

RECRUITMENT PROCESS

- Current members of the Steering Committee will recommend recruits on a periodic basis (*and*);
- When members step down from the Steering Committee, they may recommend a replacement (*and*);
- The opportunity to serve on the Steering Committee is announced at least annually at one of the Network Forums and in the WFN e-bulletin (*and*);
- Once potential recruits are identified by Steering Committee, the Coordinating Team reviews the sectors and new member criteria, identifies gaps, and determines which candidates would be a good fit for the group (*and*);
- The Coordinating Team sends an email to the Steering Committee with a recommended slate, and unless there are concerns, the Team asks the recruits to join, invites them to the next meeting, and conducts their orientation, and ensures that they have WFN Guiding Documents.

RECRUITMENT CRITERIA

When identifying recruits, the Coordinating Team looks for candidates who are:

- 1) Connected to the work of the Whatcom Food Network;
- 2) Community-oriented with a broad interest in food systems;
- 3) Well-connected within their sector, ideally with interactions across sectors;
- 4) Representative of one or more of the food system sectors;
- 5) Representative of diversity within our community, including minorities and marginalized populations; *and*
- 6) The steering committee will maintain a majority of its members in community organizations, though local businesses with a demonstrated commitment to strengthening local food systems are also welcome.

REMOVING A MEMBER

If a Steering Committee member is unable to fulfill their commitments to participate, or is generating undue conflict or stress within the Committee, the process for removal is as follows:

- If the Coordinating Team is aware of a problem, they will address it in a timely fashion via direct communication (in-person if possible).
- The issue will be named, corrective action sought, and failing corrective action, the Coordinating Team will ask the Member to step down.



Coordinating Team Guidelines

The Coordinating Team is composed of at least 3-5 members of the Steering Committee and the Network Coordinator, and meets prior to Steering Committee meetings and Network Forums to facilitate the work of the WFN. The Coordinating Team plans Network Forums, supports Action Groups as needed, oversees Steering Committee recruitment, and oversees the work of the Network Coordinator, including communications & messaging.

COORDINATING TEAM PROCESS

New members will be rotated onto the Coordinating Team every two years. Once someone has served two years, they are given the option to renew or rotate out, and a new coordinating team member will volunteer to fill the post from the existing pool of steering committee members. Steering committee members who have served for two years or more are expected to step in to fill needs on the coordinating team.

COORDINATING TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES

The Coordinating Team has a strategic role to play in representing the vision and purpose of the Network. They ensure that committees function properly, that there is full participation at meetings, that new members know what they're responsible for, and that all relevant matters are discussed and resolved.

The Coordinating Team should:

- Maintain a broad focus on the purpose of the WFN and achievement of WFN goals;
- Ensure that the WFN maintains a strong, diverse, and engaged member base;
- Monitor progress towards WFN goals and objectives; review and revise as needed;
- Ensure meetings are called and held in accordance with the organizations' schedule;
- Ensure matters are dealt with in an orderly, efficient manner.;
- Bring impartiality and objectivity to meetings and decision-making;
- Facilitate change and address conflict within the committee;
- In consultation with the Coordinator and/or other committee members establish and confirm an agenda for each meeting;
- Provide leadership & ensure committee members are aware of their obligations and that the committee complies with its responsibilities;
- Communicate effectively the vision and purpose of the Network;
- Advocate for and represent the Network at external meetings and events;
- Be aware of current issues that might affect the Network.
- Support the collaborative efforts of WFN members by helping people link to resources for meeting management, negotiation of formal agreements, outreach tools, etc;
- Support the Steering Committee Function (agendas, facilitation, minutes);
- Provide leadership for organizing the WFN Forums and other events;
- Monitor Action Groups; provide succinct reports to Steering Committee on Action Group activities and post on the website;
- Locate, help secure, and budget financial and other resources needed to support WFN functions;
- Hire and oversee the Network Coordinator.



Network Coordinator Guidelines

The Network Assistant facilitates and supports the work of the Steering Committee and Coordinating Team and maintains Network communication systems.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE WFN NETWORK COORDINATOR

- Coordinates Steering Committee and Coordinating Team meetings, including ensuring that meeting reminders and agendas are emailed in a timely manner (creates agendas, sends for review, facilitates meetings, takes minutes, sends follow-up tasks);
- Provides leadership for organizing the WFN Forums and other events;
- Monitors Subcommittees and Action Groups and provides succinct reports to the Steering Committee on activities, and posts updates on website;
- Updates the WFN website as needed with food-system information and resources;
- Creates and distributes the digital e-newsletter as scheduled according to outreach planning;
- Monitors and posts content to the WFN listserv and social media channels;
- Maintains a contact list of Network Members (updated bi-annually after each forum);
- Maintains and updates WFN files for Steering Committee and Coordinating Team communications;
- Helps identify and secure funding and other resources needed to support WFN functions when possible;
- Tracks WFN budget and expenses, and provides grant reporting as needed;
- Works closely with Coordinating Team to help implement projects and move WFN goals forward.



WFN Communication Tools

We are currently utilizing four main communication tools: the WFN website (hosted by WSU), the WFN Listserv, the WFN e-newsletter, and the WFN Facebook page. When you join the steering committee, or attend a forum, you are automatically added to the e-newsletter distribution list. More information on how to utilize the Listserv and Facebook page are below.

LISTSERV: whatcomfoodnetwork@googlegroups.com

The Whatcom Food Network Listserv is a great forum to communicate with other WFN members and individuals across all sectors of our local food system. We would like to invite you to use it so that you can easily share info, events, ideas, opportunities. It's a great way to get the word out. If you haven't posted before, it's easy – just follow the instructions below.

HOW TO USE THE LISTSERV:

1. Put whatcomfoodnetwork@googlegroups.com in your "To" box of your email
2. Draft your email and press send

WHAT TYPES OF THINGS SHOULD YOU/CAN YOU POST?

- Event invites
- Announcements
- Job Postings
- Question about business or best practices

ADD OTHER APPROPRIATE FOOD SYSTEM MEMBERS

Are there others within your organization or business that would like to be on this list, or other individuals you think would be a good fit? Send us a note and we'll add you to the list!

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND:

Don't use REPLY ALL when replying to an individual. This forum is more to share events and opportunities than having a long conversation. There are a lot of folks on this list. Try to utilize this resource without posting too often, i.e. daily, as everyone will get your info, but PLEASE USE IT!

WFN FACEBOOK PAGE: www.facebook.com/whatcomfoodnetwork

Engaging in social media is an important part of most organizations communication plans. With the help of the Network Assistant, the WFN has chosen to utilize Facebook as our main social media communication tool. As of early 2016 Facebook has 1.65 billion monthly active users, and 72% of adults that are online in the U.S. use Facebook making it the dominant social networking site currently – it is widely used and is a powerful platform to tell the WFN story, use social context to increase participation, and more easily reach out the WFN audience and larger community. It also a great tool to build organizational awareness and credibility.

HOW TO USE THE WFN FACEBOOK PAGE:

- Please like and share the page
- Post event invites, announcements, or relevant articles and news to the page
- Or tag (@whatcom food network) in relevant posts you are writing on your page or your organizations page

2020 Calendar

Meetings are the first Wednesday of the month from 1:30-3:30PM

 = Steering Committee = Coordinating Team = Forum		
MONTH	WHO	AGENDA
January (1/13)	Coordinating Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach planning for 2020 (review goals/objectives and plan accordingly) • Forum: location, time of day, networking event
February (2/5)	Steering Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forum: set final location & time of day, speakers
March (3/4)	Coordinating Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forum: Plan roles • Forum: Finalize speakers • Outreach planning
March (3/11, 12, or 18)	Networking Event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobile Meet & Greet Mixer (a tour of Marine Business Park food businesses featuring Acme Ice Cream and others TBD)
April (4/1)	Steering Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forum: review roles
May (5/6)	Coordinating Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forum Prep (meet only if needed)
May (5/13)	Forum	Consumer Food Trends
June (6/3)	Steering Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forum debrief, follow-up • Outreach update & review efforts
July (7/1)	Coordinating Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forum: set date, location, time
August (8/5)	Steering Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forum: set final location & time of day • Forum: Plan speakers
September (9/2)	Coordinating Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forum: Plan roles • Forum: Finalize speakers • Outreach planning
Sept (9/15 or 16)	Networking Event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outdoor location TBD – likely a farm operation of interest in the community
October (10/7)	Steering Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forum: review roles
November (11/4)	Coordinating Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forum Prep (meet only if needed)
November (11/TBD)	Forum	TBD
December (12/2)	Steering Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forum debrief • Review 2020 Outreach efforts • 2021 Planning



Whatcom Food Network
for a healthy, just & thriving food system

WHATCOM FOOD NETWORK LAUNCH JUNE 13, 2012 – SESSION 3 SUMMARY REPORT

I. ABOUT THE WHATCOM FOOD NETWORK

The Whatcom Food Network is a body of organizations, agencies, and institutions that are involved in strengthening the local and regional food system. The primary goals of the Whatcom Food Network are to:

- Increase coordination, communication, and collaboration among food-system related organizations, agencies, and institutions.
- Gain a collective understanding of the barriers and gaps in Whatcom County's food system and develop common goals for addressing them.
- Build community capacity through education, leveraging resources, and mutual support.
- Work inclusively with the diverse communities of our region to ensure lasting success.

[Additional Information about the Whatcom Food Network](#)

[Frequently Asked Questions](#)



II. WHATCOM FOOD NETWORK EVENTS

NETWORK LAUNCH

Following two Whatcom Food Network planning forums held in 2011 ([Forum 1 Summary](#) & [Forum 2 Summary](#)), the purpose of this session was to formally launch the Network and facilitate action groups in which participants could discuss new initiatives and key projects.

[Whatcom Food Network Launch Agenda](#)

Six action groups were proposed. Attendees participated in a facilitated discussion with one or more groups to determine how to collaboratively take action on the topic. What follows are descriptions of each action group and a proposed timeline for next steps.

A part of the launch involved a request to sign a Declaration of Support. Individuals and organizations are invited to join WFN as members by signing the Declaration in support of the goals of the Whatcom Food Network, available on the WFN [website](#).

III. ACTION GROUPS: PRESENTATION & DISCUSSION

FOOD SYSTEM EQUITY
Facilitator: Rosalinda Guillen, Community to Community Development, rosalindag@qwestoffice.net
Description of Project
Rosalinda suggests looking at local food systems through the lens of food sovereignty and educating people with an "equal voice" to create a link between underrepresented and marginalized communities and food system work in Whatcom County. While educating, it is important to make sure not to tell people that we come to help or that we have the solutions, but to have culturally appropriate conversations that build solutions from the grassroots up. This in turn will create an equitable process which will raise the overall participation in finding ways to improve our food system.
Which Whatcom Food Network Goal does this align with?
Advance community understanding of food sovereignty
Tasks of Potential Collaborators
After discussion the action group concluded that the next steps would be to look at links within agriculture cultures and the stakeholders in agriculture in regards to having a voice in policy development. There was also discussion to review the language in the nine states that have passed food sovereignty legislation if the action group chooses to take the direction of change in policy.
Timeline
The timeline could vary depending on the commitment and direction the action group chooses to go. Policy change would require much commitment and would take a long time where as education has the potential to not take as long depending on the circumstances or the short term actions chosen.

PLANNING THE 2ND ANNUAL “REEL FOOD FILM FEST”

Facilitator: Sara Southerland, Sustainable Connections, sara@sconnect.org

Description of Project

Four local food organizations helped launch this film series in winter/spring 2012 with 14 showings at libraries around Whatcom County. *The goals* of the “Reel Food Film Fest” are to 1) reach a broad Whatcom County audience with the real stories behind our food; 2) show how people are changing the way they eat for the better; 3) inform them about how the farm-to-school (F2S) program is working to increase local, fresh, seasonal and healthy foods in school meals; and 4) encourage them to become involved in the local food movement.

In addition to increasing the number of attendees for next year, we would like to have a well thought out, coordinated, educational and resource effort to take with us to each event throughout the county that includes next steps such as: a take home activity, organizations to get involved with right away, simple solutions to eating healthy on a budget within your immediate community.

Which Whatcom Food Network Goal does this align with?

This project meets all of the WFN’s goals. The primary goals for the project at this time are:

- Provide resources and education to diverse communities around Whatcom County with diverse needs and gaps
- Increase coordination and leverage resources between organizations through Reel Food Film Fest events.

Tasks of Potential Collaborators

Participants in this action group discussed reaching a larger audience by showing films at different locations such as schools and resource centers. There was also discussion around the topic of giving toolkits to the attendees allowing them to have something to take away from the film that shows what they learned.

Timeline

- **Network Launch June 13** - Planning for the 2013 Reel Food Film Fest begins
- **October-November 2013** – Apply for funding, as needed
- **February-May 2013** – Host film events around the county



CREATING HEALTHY FOOD ENVIRONMENTS: RESPONDING TO THE OBESITY AND HEALTH CRISIS

Facilitator: Laura Ridenour, Sustainable Connections, laura@sconnect.org

Description of Project

Creating healthy food environments is an idea of a collaborative project to address chronic disease and community health improvement goals by increasing healthy eating habits and food environments. This project would provide people within Whatcom County increased access to nutrition education, access to healthy foods, and engage businesses in creating healthy food environments so that everyone can make more healthy food decisions.

Physical, environmental and social environments have impacts on behavior and health outcomes. Developing healthy food environments where people work, live and get health care is the first necessary step toward setting strategic goals that inform community-wide initiatives for healthy children and families, as well as the populations most impacted by health and social issues.

Working with local businesses to shift their internal communications, advertising and messaging would persuade employees and residents to adopt healthy food habits. Key participant groups for healthy food environments are schools, hospitals and health care provider workplaces, as they educate their clients and customers as well as professionals in the field of health, and have shared chronic disease and community health goals. Health care providers and businesses of all sizes and kinds can empower everyone as role models in establishing healthier food norms in their workplaces.

Of note, the Community Health Assessment found that those disproportionately impacted by health and social disparities have “a desire and willingness to identify and participate in solutions that build on their respective community strengths.” This project could create a community voice and engagement process that affects the overall community, too.

Which Whatcom Food Network Goal does this align with?

Establishing Healthy Food Environments fits with all of the core WFN values, and with the following goal areas: Encourage institutional procurement of healthy local food, facilitate community dialogue in policy and decision making, increase equitable access to and consumption of fresh, healthy and local food, advance community understanding of food sovereignty.

Tasks of Potential Collaborators

Through positive messages, in collaboration with the Health Department, Sustainable Connections business members, and other partners working toward the Community Health Improvement Plan and ACHEVE goals, the citizens of Whatcom will have better access and knowledge around healthy foods, and will adopt behavior changes.

Initial tasks could include setting common messaging and goals for healthy behaviors, establishing workplace healthy norms for actions of all employees, creating a mentorship for healthy food cooking classes, exercise and nutrition, and advocacy and messaging for healthy food environments, including advertising in and around schools and workplaces. Collaborators will also coordinate increased healthy food access points, connecting workplaces, schools and corner stores with recipes, guides to local food, and local and direct-market farmers and nutritious local food options.

Timeline

This group was a topic discussion group focused on sharing information and increasing collaborative understanding. No further action is scheduled at this time.

AGRICULTURAL STRATEGIC PLAN: COUNTYWIDE AGRICULTURE POLICY AND IMPLEMENTATION

**Facilitator: Samya Lutz, Whatcom County Planning,
SLKLutz@co.whatcom.us**

Description of Project

The Whatcom County Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) created the Agricultural Strategic Plan which was then endorsed by the County Executive and Council last year. The AAC is largely made up of farmers representing various commodity groups in Whatcom County: dairy, berries, nursery crops, seed potatoes; as well as market growers and those from agriculture support businesses. We're interested in a wide diversity of perspectives on planning for agriculture, including perspectives on the laws, policies, and regulations, how water can be used, and so much more.

Which Whatcom Food Network Goal does this align with?

Facilitate community dialogue in policy development and decision-making; secure an abundance of healthy and available land; and leverage regional strength to access resources and raise awareness.

Tasks of Potential Collaborators

Collaborators with the agricultural strategic plan are encouraged to become involved in the official planning processes that make policy and regulatory change in the county (through public workshops and open houses, and through regular meetings of the Planning Commission and County Council). What is missing? What is important to you or your organization? Involvement does not have to mean "advocacy" – it can simply mean expressing your perspective wherever you happen to focus within the food system in order to remind others of the breadth this work has and to keep individual initiatives in perspective. Diversity among collaborators is needed in order for all voices within Whatcom County to be heard.

Timeline

Implementation of the Agriculture Strategic Plan has begun and will continue over the next several years. The County Planning Commission will discuss the plan in general on July 12, and begin consideration of specific items (the first is the Parcel Reconfiguration Tool) in September 2012. Those interested in staying abreast of these initiatives can be added to a regular email list.



FOOD SYSTEM PUBLIC EDUCATION

**Facilitator: Colleen Burrows, WSU Agriculture Special Projects
Coordinator, cburrows@wsu.edu**

Description of Project

The Whatcom County Community Food Assessment documented the complexity of the food system and how few people understand many of the intricacies of the system. This action group will work to educate the public about the issues within the Whatcom County food system and how we all fit together in this puzzle. Education may be accomplished through a variety of methods, including forums, films, and article series.

Which Whatcom Food Network Goal does this align with?

Facilitate community dialogue in policy development and decision making.

Tasks of Potential Collaborators

The food system is very complex so using a variety of education methods would be necessary. The action group discussed incorporating volunteers to offer education in the public schools as a way to incorporate a more diverse audience. Topics such as community gardens as well as school gardens would be an effective way to not only educate but get the community involved. However there were gaps identified that must be addressed. School-based education would not be effective for those adults without kids. Other gaps include those who may not be connected to educational organizations such as the Community Food Co-op, and the lack of knowledge in larger food system issues.

Timeline

Group meeting in July to determine educational opportunities through the year.



CREATING A “RECIPE REPOSITORY” AND COMPENDIUM OF NUTRITION EDUCATION RESOURCES

**Facilitator: Mardi Solomon, Whatcom Farm-to-School,
coordinator@whatcomfarmtoschool.org**

Description of Project

A big part of encouraging people to eat more fresh, healthy, and locally grown foods is helping them learn to prepare these foods in simple, quick, and delicious ways. For those who feel comfortable in the kitchen and those who are motivated to do more cooking, an easily accessible on-line “Recipe Repository” will be a helpful tool for getting inspiration and guidance. For those who are not skilled in cooking with fresh foods and making healthy meals, there are existing nutrition education resources available in Whatcom County (e.g., cooking classes, blogs), and we want to make it easy for people to find them on-line. This Action Group will compile a “Recipe Repository” and a compendium of nutrition education resources.

Which Whatcom Food Network Goal does this align with?

Increase consumption of and equitable access to local healthy food

Tasks of Potential Collaborators

Collaborators will:

- Contribute to the collections of recipes, on-line resources, and nutrition education tools.
- Spread the word to people who may have resources to contribute to the collections.
- Assist with design, organization, and promotion of the two on-line tools.
- Test recipes.

One idea is to host community pot lucks so people can share recipes and locally produced foods they enjoy.

Timeline

- **June-July 2012** – Collect materials with primary focus on Recipe Repository, but also collect nutrition education materials
- **August 2012** – Organize Recipe Repository, continue collecting nutrition education materials
- **September 2012** - Upload Recipe Repository website(s), continue collecting nutrition education materials
- **October 2012** – Organize Compendium of Nutrition Education resources
- **November 2012** – Upload nutrition education resources
- **January 2012** – Begin planning community potlucks to share recipes and local foods



IV. NEXT STEPS

Network leadership will transition from a Planning Committee to a Steering Committee. The Planning Committee will be working to ensure that organizations representing the diversity within the Whatcom County food system are part of the Whatcom Food Network. The Steering Committee will be composed of individuals who represent all sectors of the food system and will be supported administratively by WSU Extension and the Whatcom County Health Department. Members who are interested in serving on the Steering Committee should email: whatcomcommunityfoodnetwork@gmail.com

To join WFN as an individual supporter or on behalf of your agency you can sign a Declaration of Support. You can sign it online by going to the [WFN website](#).

Members can communicate about events, potential collaborative opportunities, current action group activities and more using the WFN [e-bulletin](#). The e-bulletin will be the main tool for WFN communication between biannual WFN meetings.

APPENDIX

List of Attending Agencies

Bellingham Farmers Market
Bellingham Food Bank
Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship
Catholic Housing Services
City of Bellingham
Common Threads Farm
Forest Garden Urban Ecology Center
Garden of Hope (Neighbors in Need food bank, Mt. Vernon)
Mercy Housing Northwest
Slow Food Fourth Corner
Sustainable Connections
Whatcom Community Foundation
Whatcom Community Television and Communications
Whatcom Council on Aging
Whatcom County Health Department
Whatcom Farm Friends
WSU Extension
WSU Extension--Carbon Masters
WSU Whatcom County Extension, Food \$ense