



FPCs can broaden the discussion of food and agricultural issues to facilitate a more comprehensive examination of food systems.

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How Food Policy Councils Are Organized & Operate

Introduction

Chapter 4:

In this chapter, we'll visit some successful food policy councils in the U.S. and see the impact of their work on food security in communities they serve.

The North Carolina Food Policy Council has scored some remarkable results since its creation in 2001 in its role as the official policy office of the state's Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

With its ability to offer recommendations based on thorough research to the Agriculture Department, the Council paves the way for many successful projects to feed the state's 900,000 residents who experience chronic bouts of hunger. The projects are designed to be a win-win situation not only for the state's consumers and especially at-risk people, but for farmers who supply a cornucopia of affordable, nutritious food for the state-operated food security program.

Examples of the food security programs operated by the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services include:



Volunteers with the North Carolina Gleaning Project bag 40,000 pounds of sweet potatoes as part of National Hunger Awareness Day observances in June, 2004. More than 900,000 people in the state experience chronic hunger each year.



- A farm produce gleaning project that the department operates made it possible for about 350 North Carolina farmers to donate more than six million pounds of surplus and commercially-unusable food in 2003 to the state's estimated 900,000 residents who experience poverty-level hunger.
- Under its farm-to-school program, North Carolina farmers sold \$335,000 worth of watermelons, cantaloupes, tomatoes, apples, pumpkins, cabbage, broccoli and sweet potatoes as a healthy addition to cafeteria foods such as spaghetti and chicken filet sandwiches in 54 of the state's 116 school districts.
- The State Agriculture Department also coordinates a network of farmers' markets that makes available healthful, delicious food to residents in virtually every part of North Carolina.
- And through its nine anti-hunger and food security programs, such as a summer program to provide meals for school-aged children at poverty level, the State Agriculture Department last year requisitioned, stored and distributed food valued at \$41.1 million to agencies and organizations feeding the hungry.

WHAT IS A FOOD POLICY COUNCIL?

State and local Food Policy Councils (FPC's) are an officially sanctioned body comprised of stakeholders from various segments of a food system. FPC's are innovative collaborations between citizens and government officials which give voice to the concerns and interests of many who have long been under-served by agricultural institutions.

WHY CREATE A FOOD POLICY COUNCIL?

FPC's can broaden the discussion of food and agricultural issues to facilitate a more comprehensive examination of food systems. FPC's serve as a forum in which people involved from many different parts of the food system and government can learn more about what each does. This in turn provides stakeholders with more information as to how individual actions impact local and regional food systems.

WHAT ARE POSSIBLE OUTCOMES?

By empowering a citizen group to make a comprehensive examination of a food system, objective recommendations and ideas for improving a food system can be made. Initiatives resulting from FPC recommendations in participating states have included:

- ◆Creating a State Food Security Task Force
- ◆Developing guidelines for school nutrition programs
- ◆Promoting direct marketing opportunities such as institutional purchasing
- ◆Implementing the farmers' market nutrition program
- ◆Developing state-wide marketing initiatives to promote locally grown foods
- ◆Organizing regional conferences and national workshops to promote state and local FPC's.

-- DRAKE UNIVERSITY
AGRICULTURAL LAW CENTER

The North Carolina Food Policy Council is an excellent example of how such groups that research and monitor food problems can pave the way for projects that effectively address the identified needs. The apparatus in place in North Carolina seems to be a good fit. The Food Policy Council makes recommendations to the North Carolina State Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, that with its extensive resources and contacts is in a position to create and coordinate statewide food projects that involve strong farmer to consumer links.

✓ It's important to note that in many states where they operate, food policy councils serve not only agriculture departments but many other state departments that deal with food issues such as hunger programs, food safety and nutrition.

Food policy councils take A holistic approach

"The growing community food security movement, which links anti-hunger, sustainable agriculture, nutrition, and other groups, encourages examining these issues together. Food policy councils are the embodiment of that vision in local and state governments. These councils have developed projects and policies to improve their communities' access to food and overall nutrition as well as support local farmers and sustainable farming practices. Overall, food policy members translate the sometimes disconnected areas of community food security into common terms, and they transform win-lose situations into win-win opportunities to improve a community's health, economy, and environment."

"Food Policy Councils: Practice and Possibilities" by authors Sarah Borron and Bill Emerson of the Congressional Hunger Center, published June 2003

When policy problems or opportunities arise in operation of these programs, the North Carolina Food Policy Council leaps into action.

As an example, when a number of North Carolina farmers expressed concern about possible liabilities they would face in allowing people on their land to gather surplus crops under the state gleaning project, the Food Policy Council recommended changes in state law. North Carolina House Bill 1335, passed by the General Assembly, states that growers are not held liable if anything happens to a volunteer while in their field. And the Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act, signed by President Clinton in 1996, protects donors from liability should the product donated in good faith later cause harm to the recipient. A later chapter of this handbook, dealing with community food system

projects, features gleaning and farm-to-school projects operated by the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

A list of food policy councils in the U.S. can be found on page 65 of this chapter.

About 35 food policy councils similar to the one in North Carolina are operating as either offices of county or state governments, or as independent nonprofit organizations.

In many cases, food policy councils are created by government bodies as the result of a report or series of events in a community showing that dramatic changes are needed in the local food system. For instance, a report might be issued on the rise in poverty-level households and hunger in a community. The FPCs are formed to conduct public education and research, delve into advocacy work, propose necessary legislation and give overall guidance about how to remedy such a problem of food insecurity in the community. Many times these types of FPCs are asked to not only look into local food system deficiencies and policy issues but to help design and implement projects that address those matters. Their role is also to continue monitoring and educate the public and government officials about the community food system.

There are many advantages for an FPC to be linked to government entities: instant status in a community, having a political infrastructure to support and enact its findings, and the funding and office space necessary to function. On the

Be prepared for some funding hurdles

Whether a food policy council works for a government body or nonprofit organization, funding for operations is most likely to be a serious issue. As many other reports on the subject show, FPCs often operate on thin budgets and depend heavily on volunteer staff and in-kind donations. But then, such is the economic plight of virtually every nonprofit in the U.S. – they mostly operate on “soft” money or donations of time, products and money.

However, funding sources do exist for food policy councils. A list of possible funders is included in Chapter 7 of this handbook. Several possible funding sources are:

- The USDA Community Food Projects Grant Program and USDA Risk Management Agency have recently funded startup food policy councils
 - Many cities, counties and states have appropriated money, usually as a line item in the budget of their administering agency
 - Government entities have also donated clerical and professional in-kind staff services for food policy council operations
-

other hand, food policy councils tied to nonprofit organizations and not government entities might be able to express themselves more candidly and work more freely on political barriers that impact a local food system. Either way, support by local or state government officials is an

essential element of the work of food policy councils. No FPC can effectively work outside the political arena.

✓ “Food policy councils play an integral role when it comes to food system planning. They must be visionary, forward thinking and strategic in their efforts to identify what kind of food system they want for their city, county or state, and then to start working toward that vision.

More immediately, they should be working with public planners to be sure that food system issues, such as bus routes, land use planning and health concerns, are incorporated into their routine planning activities.”

Mark Winne
New Mexico Food & Agriculture Policy Council

Creating a food policy coalition (FPC) involves much of the same process that we discussed in the previous chapter on creating a food coalition, as far as the actual organizational issues are concerned. The process begins as a group of stakeholders are called together who have a background and interest in such areas as agriculture, food security, food processing and distribution, nutrition and food legislative matters. The ball gets rolling from there.

In this chapter we’ll see how some successful U.S. food policy councils operate and their impact on the community food systems they serve.

1

Knoxville: Home of the oldest food policy council

The concept of food policies councils and the very first food policy council itself had their origins in the South. The Knoxville-Knox County (TN) Food Policy Council was founded in 1982 as the result of a groundbreaking study of the city’s food system by the University of Tennessee. It broke new ground with its concept that a community’s food system

Knoxville FPC funding

The City of Knoxville allocates \$4,000 a year for administration of the FPC.

Grants are sometimes drawn upon to pay other staff salaries. Upon expansion, the county government was asked to provide funding equivalent to the city’s contribution.

should be given the same proprietary status as its system of streets and water works. Conducted in 1977, the study by Robert Wilson, a professor of urban planning, and some of his students at the University of Tennessee found that Knoxville's food system wasn't getting the job done when it came to providing nutritious food for all the city's residents. The college researchers found rising levels of hunger among poverty-level residents and diet-related illness and obesity that was prevalent among residents of all income brackets. Additionally, the county was losing farmland, and its ability to feed itself, to urban sprawl and other causes. Wilson and his students recommended the creation of a city entity that would be charged with making recommendations to improve the community food system.

Under its bylaws, the Knoxville FPC was mandated to:

- Monitor and evaluate the performance of Knoxville's Food system, in terms of costs, availability, accessibility, and implications for public health and economic efficiency.
- Identify food related problems needing attention and disseminate public reports describing those problems, along with suggested remedies where possible.
- Promulgate goals and objectives for the food system.
- Communicate findings and recommendations about food issues to the Mayor, City Council, County Commission, and other relevant public officials.
- Act as a forum for discussion and coordination of community-wide efforts to improve the overall food supply and distribution network of the Knoxville community.

As the city prepared to host the 1982 World Fair, the time seemed ripe for the Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Committee (CAC) and the Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC) to organize a public body to examine and address the food system as a whole. The Knoxville City Council agreed with the university research team that food planning was a legitimate responsibility of local government. In 1982, the Knoxville Food Policy Council (KFPC) became this body, the first of its kind in the nation.

As the scope of the food policy council was expanded in 2002 to include the entire county, the FPC was re-named the Knoxville-Knox County Food Policy Council.

Knoxville-Knox FPC membership

While the Knoxville-Knox County FPC does not have the power to enforce or control local food policies, it serves as an advisory body that makes recommendations about food-related policies to the city and county

governments. The FPC is composed of 11 volunteer members, of which five are appointed by the city's mayor and six are named by the Knox County chief executive. Members include one city councilor, one county commissioner, consumer and neighborhood advocates, people from the nutrition and health sector, and individuals involved in agriculture and the food industry.

The FPC also makes use of an "associate member" category to include relevant public agency representatives when the need arises. Associate members can participate in deliberations of the food policy council but do not have voting rights. The food policy council routinely elects officers and names executive, nominating and special committees whose members can be elected, appointed or assigned respectively from among its members. Advisory committees are occasionally assembled from external representatives to provide access to issues and additional expertise.

The city provides up to four staff people on a limited, part-time basis for council work.

Some accomplishments of the Knoxville FPC

- ❖ After receiving a recommendation from KFPC, the Knoxville Public School District hired a full-time nutrition educator who is responsible for preparation and delivery of educational programs and coordinates existing programs.
- ❖ Breakfasts are now provided free or at reduced cost to all of Knoxville's low-income students.
- ❖ The FPC issues newsletters and annual reports in order to maintain accountability and increase visibility. It conducts workshops, forums, and hearings to call attention to deficiencies in the local food system.
- ❖ The regional transportation authority commonly requests a review of food access from the FPC when altering its bus routes. Some buses have installed racks for the convenience of riders who take the bus to do their grocery shopping.
- ❖ Recommendations from the FPC helped to establish twenty-seven community and school gardens.

Contact:

Knoxville/Knox County Food Policy Council -- www.kornet.org/kfpc

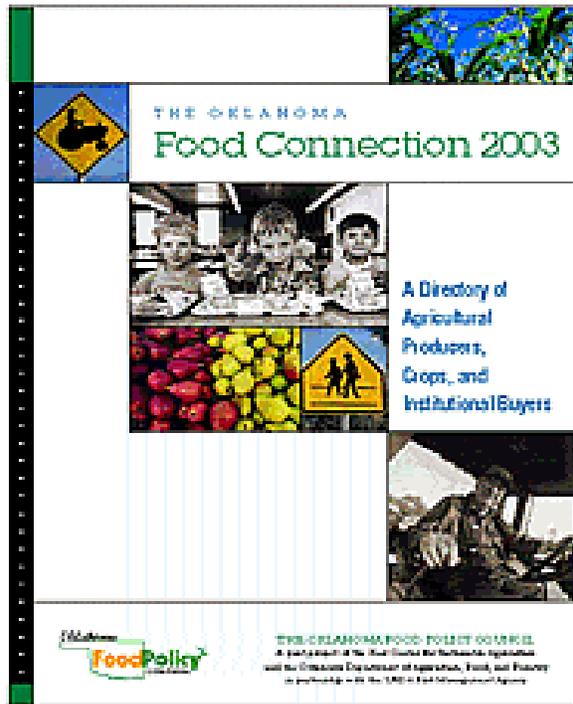
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2 Oklahoma FPC focuses on farmers & rural residents

Sometimes the “community” that a food policy council serves is not defined by physical boundaries but by a specific population of a state. Since its founding in 2001, the Oklahoma Food Policy Council has devoted itself to making life better for the 38% of the state’s population who live on farms and other rural places. However, as readers will see, the farm-to-school program that the FPC is launching to economically invigorate rural Oklahoma will benefit every resident of the state by providing locally-produced, nutritious food for school children. Money from sales of local farm goods to the school districts will be a boon for many rural towns that still play a key role in determining the well-being of the state’s economy.



A directory of Oklahoma farmers and the products they provide for institutional buyers was published by the state food policy council.

The two founding organizations of the FPC are themselves well-based in Oklahoma agriculture – they are the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture and the nonprofit Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture of Poteau, OK, that since 1965 has helped struggling family farmers stay on the land. The FPC members set two main goals: to bring food security to the four percent of Oklahomans who experience chronic hunger each year and generate economic development in the rural areas by providing new markets for family farms.

In Oklahoma and everywhere around the nation, the small and medium sized, independent family farm continues to be in crisis.

According to the USDA's Small Farm Commission Report, 'Local patterns of production, distribution and consumption of food are increasingly replaced by global operations and interests. Small and medium farmers are regularly squeezed out of business by high input costs, low prices for their products, and poor access to markets.'

No wonder then that in a recent MSN web article on career choices, farming was #1 on the list of dead-end occupations.

-- The Oklahoma Farm-to-School Report

In heavily rural states like Oklahoma, the collapse of the farm economy has had far-reaching impacts. While about 7.5 percent of Oklahomans are engaged in farming or farm-related jobs and the state's 86,000 farms contribute about \$4.6 billion annually to the Oklahoma economy, each farm in the state makes on average less than \$3,759 after expenses annually. The state's farmers are among the "hidden poor" because in many instances they do not seek public relief and so their poverty remains unreported.

Persistent poverty pervades much of rural Oklahoma. Poverty rates in non-metro Oklahoma are 17.5%, compared to the 12.9% poverty rate of the metropolitan parts of the state. Almost 12 per cent of Oklahoma households are food insecure, which is defined as "limited or uncertain access to nutritious food on a daily basis."

The Oklahoma Food Connection Directory can be downloaded at the website:

<http://www.kerrcenter.com/ofpc/foodconnection.htm>

The Oklahoma Farm-to-School Report is available at:

<http://www.kerrcenter.com/ofpc/farmentoschool.htm>

Soon after the Oklahoma Food Policy Council was founded in 2001, the 15 people who made up the initial membership decided to examine the potential for increasing the amount of locally-grown food in public institutions in the state. They conducted a survey of 638 institutional food service directors at Oklahoma public schools, colleges, correctional centers, state hospitals, technology centers and state resorts. With a phenomenal return rate of 67%, the survey showed that not much Oklahoma-grown food was being used in these institutions but that their food staffs had a high level of interest in buying local produce. Over half of food service managers and 73 percent of food service staffs in large school systems said they would like to connect with local food producers.

An analysis of the survey on the importance of increasing consumption of locally-produced food was compiled in a publication titled, *The Oklahoma Farm-to-School Report*. Over a two-year period, the FPC also gathered information for the *Oklahoma Food Connection Directory* that contains information about individual Oklahoma farmers and the crops and livestock they produce, direct marketing outlets such as farmers markets, public institutions interested in buying local produce, and a harvest calendar.

"Today, analysts say that most major cities have a limited amount of food available close at hand. In the U.S. the typical 'fresh' food item is typically hauled an average of 1500 to 2500 miles from farmer to consumer, 25 per cent farther than in 1980. (Distances are much greater for imported foods, such as grapes from Chile.) It can take a week for food to travel from coast to coast."

**Dr. Jim Horne, Director
Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture
Poteau, OK**

One of the key findings of the survey was that the Oklahoma farm family's share of the food dollar is now on average less than seventeen cents, and is much less for many individual food items. As *The Oklahoma Farm-to-School Report* states, "This state of affairs goes largely unnoticed by the urban population because people are by and large alienated from farming and their food. Without country-of-origin labeling, many people do not know where their food comes from, much less the ins and outs of agricultural production. They

certainly would have difficulty calculating how much of the food in their grocery carts was grown or processed in Oklahoma."

The Oklahoma State Food Policy Council determined that one way to keep food dollars at home and also improve the diets of the state's children would be to offer school students healthy, locally grown food. A farm-to-school program

involving hundreds of school districts and state farm families was set to be launched in fall of 2004.

In Oklahoma, about 387,000 of approximately 600,000 schoolchildren (about 61%) participate in the school lunch program. As in other states, vending machines, which most often offer soda pop and candy to children at school, are coming under fire for contributing to the obesity crisis. Many Oklahoma school children, as well as their parents, do not have a firm idea about what constitutes a daily balanced diet. And like many Americans, they have lost touch with how their food is produced.

Dr. Jim Horne, director of the Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture, reflects on some major changes in the U.S. food system the past century: “Our food system has evolved from one in which most cities were surrounded by farms which supplied them with produce and dairy products to one in which urban sprawl and the concentration of food production in select areas of the country have virtually eliminated the near-urban food supply.”

The FPC is confident that the farm-to-school program will be a win-win program for the state’s farm families and school children. Schools will be able to provide fresh produce quickly and with lower transportation costs by buying it from small farmers instead of from distant markets. While fresh fruits and vegetables are often the mainstays of such programs, other locally-raised farm products such as dairy, eggs, nuts, meat, even breads and other locally-processed products could also be sold to schools.

- ★ Members of the Oklahoma State Food Policy Council represent a diversity of backgrounds: farming and ranching, food processing, retail foods, education, the media, tribal, conservation, religious and anti-hunger organizations.
- ★ Key staff from the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food, and Forestry and the Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture assist members.
- ★ The Food Policy Council meets once a month to monitor progress and discuss new projects.

Why was the Oklahoma Food Policy Council established?

- To broaden the discussion of issues beyond simply agricultural production to a more comprehensive, food system-wide examination
- To provide an opportunity for a focused examination of how state and local government actions shape the food system

- To create a forum in which people involved in all different parts of the food system and government can meet to learn more about what each one does and to consider how their actions impact other parts of the system.
- To improve nutrition and the provision of nutritional information throughout Oklahoma
- To create an infrastructure within the food system which will better connect stakeholders such as food producers, consumers, communities, food processors, marketers, and government agencies, including those agencies which may also be consumers
- To improve the economic status of Oklahomans involved in the food system by creating new opportunities, increasing profitability and ensuring that food dollars stay close to home through local processing, enhanced distribution, direct marketing diversification of products, and distribution of information regarding presently under-utilized opportunities.

Contact:

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3

Lane County, Oregon FPC targets one of highest hunger rates in U.S.

Heading up northwest, we'll see that not all food policy councils are operated in direct partnership with local or state governments. The Lane County Food Policy Council at Eugene/Springfield, OR, is the offspring of two nonprofit organizations, a local college and a network of six community action groups. Now in the final formation stage, the fledgling FPC has set an ambitious agenda to address what are some of the highest statewide rates of hunger and unemployment in the U.S.



A worker in the Lane County Community Gardens bundles some carrots for the anti-hunger food program.

Recent federal Census Bureau statistics show that 4.3% of Oregon residents experience food insecurity with hunger, and 12.9% of Oregonians are rated as “food insecure”. Approximately one in five Oregon residents at some point during the year do not know where their next meal is coming from.

Nearly 323,000 people live in Lane County, with about half of the population residing in Eugene and Springfield, the second largest metro area next to Portland. Many small rural towns and family farms that are capable of producing an abundant diversity of food dot the countryside.

The founding organizations of the Lane County FPC bring to the table years of experience in operating anti-hunger programs and conducting community food projects – plus invaluable new learnings amassed during a thorough assessment of the local food system. The founding partners are: Food for Lane County (FFLC), a nonprofit that serves one in five county residents annually with an

array of food programs such as emergency distributions, community gardens and summer school lunches; the Lane County Food Coalition that operates a slew of local food projects for county farmers and consumers; and the University of Oregon Cooperative Extension Service. Through a USDA Community Food Projects grant, the partners developed six community action groups of residents across the county to discuss the local food system and concoct a plan for countywide food security.

Community action groups make recommendations

The work of the six community action groups during 2003 culminated in a Lane County Food Planning Summit. As a result, the community action groups identified some key food policy issues that included:

✓ **Access to nutritious local food for hunger relief**

Example: Senior and disabled people need more and better transportation to emergency food pantries, farmers' markets, community gardens and affordable grocery stores. Drivers may need insurance.

✓ **An economic development strategy that increases the production, marketing and consumption of local food .**

Example: Food producers favored a “branding” of local food with a label on produce, processed foods (with some local ingredients), and wines to develop and advertise niche markets

Example: A number of farmers would like a year-round farmers' market to have a stable market. Some would extend their growing season through greenhouses.

✓ **Customers also requested that many more dollars stay in our region when local food is purchased from local outlets. Are policy makers willing to invest in infrastructure?**

✓ **Present and future generations of farmers and the land base to support them.**

Example: A number of farmers are ready to retire. Beginning farmers need land and mentors. What policies can keep land in or restored to farming?

✓ **Opportunities for healthier food choices, especially among youth, seniors, and persons with limited access to food .**

Example: Farmers and people with low incomes strongly support federal and state Senior/WIC coupon programs that allow some seniors and mothers to purchase directly from farmers' markets and put fresh, high-quality produce in the mouths of people who may not otherwise be able to afford it. Participants felt its administrative guidelines could be improved.

✓ **A survey of students at some high schools in Eugene indicates that they would like to try a local, organic salad bar in their schools. Could policies support the purchasing of local food by public institutions such as schools?**

Lane County FPC takes action on the recommendations

Acting on recommendations of the six community action groups, the Lane County Food Policy Council has created the following action steps to address food security and policy needs to date:

- ❖ Develop a “Food Charter” and strategy (on the model of Portland and Toronto) to guide the development of specific initiatives.
- ❖ Support Farm to Cafeteria Projects in Lane County (schools, hospitals, prisons, nursing homes).
- ❖ Promote the available funds from the Farm Service Agency to new farmers looking to purchase land and retiring farmers who wish to keep their land in agriculture.
- ❖ Support a branded buy-local campaign for regional food producers.
- ❖ Do an assessment of transportation to food sources in Lane County (time, distance, route and cost).
- ❖ Recommend that access to fresh foods through retail outlets is considered essential in all neighborhoods.
- ❖ Investigate and recommend incentives for waste reduction and food reuse (rescue) for food businesses.
- ❖ Provide a comprehensive look at Lane County’s disaster preparedness as regards food. Encourage the County and Cities to designate food processing as a strategic industry.

- ❖ Investigate the Community Reinvestment Act to encourage structures that allow citizens to invest in local projects.
- ❖ Investigate and propose incentives for urban homeowners with yard gardens and businesses that reduce asphalt usage and increase garden space (capturing more rainwater and improving air quality).
- ❖ Create a workshop or lecture series for city and county planners on food policy/security issues.
- ❖ Identify level 1 farmland in Lane County and develop policies to keep it in food production.
- ❖ Investigate food producing capacity on public lands (ex. utility right-of-ways) and develop a plan for transitioning them to multi-use community garden space.
- ❖ Develop incentives for food businesses (restaurants, processors, stores) that use locally grown or produced products.
- ❖ Conduct impact studies of current land use practices on local food systems.

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4 **Florida Impact: Interfaith group is advocate for food security**

Religious organizations have been a leading catalyst for social justice in the South for more than 200 years, so their work in food policy councils that bring food to the poor is a natural fit. Florida Impact is one such interfaith organization that since 1979 has wracked up a record of one successful



The motto of the Tallahassee-based nonprofit is: “Mobilizing communities against hunger & poverty”

policy campaign after another, many of which concern community food security. The Tallahassee-based nonprofit also holds regular trainings for religious and nonprofit organizations in how to become active in public policy matters that focus on economic and social justice for impoverished people.

Florida Impact does not describe itself as a food policy council – it was founded in 1979 before the phrase itself was coined. But the organization functions as an FPC in light of its mission to “reduce hunger in Florida by increasing access to food programs through aggressive outreach strategies and public policy advocacy.” It has been at the forefront of the anti-hunger movement in Florida for many years, and the past several years has been heavily involved with a collaboration of other nonprofits and state and federal government agencies in activities of the Florida Security Team. That official state entity has a mandate to eradicate hunger in the Sunshine State within the next five years, mainly by improving and expanding public access to public food programs.

There are 660,000 “food insecure” households in Florida – which translates into 1.5 million Floridians who are hungry at some point during the year. Food insecurity in Florida has been on the rise in recent years, increasing from 10.5 percent in 1999 to 11.7 percent in 2004. The number of Florida residents listed by the USDA as “food insecure with hunger” was 3.7% in 2004.

Florida Impact is involved separately with its own food security initiative which it calls “Stamp Out Hunger.” A five-year strategic plan the nonprofit has created towards that objective is available for downloading at its website. Much of that plan describes food policy issues to be addressed at the local and state level with the Florida legislature by the nonprofit’s statewide network of citizen advocates and constituent organizations of religious and community groups.

Florida Impact Policy Board

- African Methodist Episcopal Church
- Florida Association of Jewish Federations
- Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
- Church Women United in Florida
- The Episcopal Diocese of Florida The Episcopal Diocese of Southeast Florida
- Evangelical Lutheran Church of America
- Farm worker Organizations Action Group
- Florida Coalition for the Homeless
- Lutheran Church/Missouri Synod
- Presbyterian Church/Synod of South Atlantic:
- Central Florida Presbytery
- Peace River Presbytery
- Tampa Bay Presbytery
- Religious Society of Friends
- SHARE Tampa Bay
- United Church of Christ/Florida Conference:
- Celebration Mission Council
- Central Coastal Mission Council
- Gold Coast Mission Council
- Southwest Mission Council
- St. John’s Mission Council
- Unitarian Universalist Association
- United Methodist Church/Florida Conference
- United Methodist Women

Florida Impact's legislative victories include:

- Laws that made it possible for 14 counties in 2003 to issue Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) coupons to over 32,000 WIC clients in 2003. Farmers received payments of over \$324,000. Program participation increased by 17.5% over the 2000 baseline data.
- A state mandate to require all of Florida's elementary schools to offer the federal School Breakfast Program (16 counties did not provide this entitlement program until the mandate took effect in 1990.)
- A law to provide farm workers with the right to know about hazardous chemicals in the workplace without fear of employer retribution
- Regulation of the interest rates of the title loan industry
- A state-funded match for Individual Development Accounts (IDAs) targeted to savings accounts for public assistance participants
- State funding for the Temporary Income Bridge Program - an extension of food stamps for legal immigrants denied them via federal welfare reforms
- Health and safety worker protections (including those relative to sexual harassment) for "workfare" workers
- Establishment of an environmental justice commission to study and recommend changes for the disproportionate placement of toxic waste sites in low-income neighborhoods
- Regulation of the labor pool industry to prevent the exploitation of low-wage workers

Much of Florida Impact's focus is on increasing the capacity of organizations that serve limited-resource people to change or create public policy to assist their efforts. In this area, the nonprofit provides:

- **Trainings.** Florida Impact conducts legislative trainings at the state capitol in which service lobbyists share information on bills and budget priorities relative to food security concerns. Participants are guided through the process a bill takes to passage and, when possible, participate in a news conference on one of Impact's priorities.
- **Publications for Citizen Advocacy.** Each year Impact publishes the Prepare and the Update, two booklets that come out before and after (respectively) the convening of the Florida Legislature. These materials provide information on bills and budget priorities before the state legislature and U.S. Congress that affect low-income people. Prepare provides a legislative directory, and the Update publishes voting records on legislation outlined in the Prepare. Three legislative Alerts are mailed to members as the Florida Legislature moves through its annual session. Every two years, Florida Impact publishes "Feeding

Florida,” a report on hunger and the effectiveness of food and nutrition programs in each of the state’s 67 counties.

Publications available at the Florida Impact website are:

✓ **Florida Food Resource Directory**

A searchable database that contains both public and private food resources in each of the state's 67 counties.

✓ **Feeding Florida: Responses to Hunger in the Sunshine State**

In 2003, Florida Impact issued its most recent edition of this report that serves as an education and advocacy resource for lawmakers and organizations working on food security in the state. New editions of the publication are issued every two years.

Contact:

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SUMMARY

As we’ve seen in this chapter, the term “food policy council” is a bit of a misnomer because FPCs play a much broader role than only addressing matters of public policy.

- ✓ **Roles of a Food Policy Council**
 - Public food system education
 - Identify & define the necessary food system
 - Food system research
 - Advocacy initiatives
 - Guidance to elected officials & government offices
 - Proposing legislation
 - Establishing food projects

Consisting of diverse memberships from the city, county or state they represent, they are usually connected to government entities. They do not relegate themselves solely to serving agricultural interests within these governments -- although agriculture is a main area of focus and devotion for them -- but work across government offices to cover many other aspects of the food system such as anti-hunger, nutrition and food safety. In serving these broad constituencies, food policy councils work in the areas of public education, food system research, and advocacy efforts.

✓ Actually getting started is usually the hardest part of any endeavor. Organizers (perhaps a single person) wonders: “Who do I go to? How do I get others interested?”

We hope that in this chapter readers have acquired an elementary understanding of how food policy councils are formed and operate. The informational resources mentioned should help potential FPC organizers to understand that many forms of free and low-cost information are available to them, along with people at work in the field who can assist them. People involved with existing food policy councils are some of the best sources of guidance, and in our experience we have found them eager to help. We mention some of these contacts in the reference section at the end of this chapter.

However, as we’ve seen in examples of food policy councils presented in this chapter, not all food policy councils are the creation of public governments. Some are stand-alone organizations that were created to help reform community food systems by bands of private citizens, community nonprofit organizations or interfaith groups.

The scope of work for food policy councils ranges from a single neighborhood or portion of a city or town to a statewide network.

Food policy council publications

The publication, *Getting Food on the Table: An Action Guide to Local Food Policy* (1999) by the Community Food Security Coalition, is an excellent tool designed to support local efforts to promote community food security, by helping readers to understand the breadth of policies affecting their local food system, evaluate policy barriers and opportunities, develop innovative policy solutions, and identify useful resources.

Order it for \$10 at:

http://www.foodsecurity.org/pubs.html#action_guide



Food Policy Councils: Practice and Possibilities is one of the best informational sources on the work of food policy councils in community food security programs. The 43-page report, issued in 2003, was funded by the USDA Community Food Project Grants program and written by Sarah Borron, a Bill Emerson Fellow of the Congressional Hunger Center. Below are some examples from that report of how food policy councils pave the way and fortify the work of food coalitions with their research, outreach and advocacy efforts.

- The Hartford Advisory Commission on Food Policy in Connecticut monitors grocery store prices. It uses this information to ensure equitable pricing for low-income residents within grocery chains.
- The Toronto Food Policy Council, for example, produced fifteen discussion papers on topics ranging from incorporating food security in urban planning to the impact of international trade agreements on Canadian food security.
- Based on a report showing that residents of low-income neighborhoods in Austin, Texas, had fewer, smaller, and more expensive food outlets than other parts of the city, the Austin/Travis Food Policy Council worked to develop low-cost community gardens that provided a local source of cheap, nutritious food for low-income community members.
- The Berkeley Food Policy Council in California successfully petitioned the city council to adopt a federal resolution calling for the ban of genetically-modified (GMO) foods. That council was also instrumental in the city's of the nation's first municipal food policies in October 2001.

To download the publication, please go to:

http://www.lanefood.org/pdf/food_policy_councils/food_policy_council_report_february_2003.pdf



The Agricultural Law Center at Drake University in Iowa -- in partnership with the USDA Risk Management Agency -- is a national information clearinghouse that helps communities and states to establish food policy councils. Their website features many publications to assist communities in the areas of agricultural law and food policy.

Visit the organization's website at:

www.statefoodpolicy.org

Food policy councils in the U.S.

Arizona

Arizona Food Policy Coalition
Cindy Gentry
Director,
Community Food Connections
P.O. Box 22216
Phoenix, AZ 85028
602.493.5231
F: 602.296.4255
www.foodconnect.org

California

Berkeley Food Policy Council
E-mail: admin@berkeleyfood.org
www.berkeleyfood.org

California Community Food Security
Network
Community Food Security Coalition
PO Box 209
Venice, CA 90294
Phone: 310-822-5410
www.foodsecurity.org

Contra Costa County Food and
Nutrition Policy Consortium
Lindsay Johnson
The Food Bank of Contra Costa and
Solano
P.O. Box 271966
Concord, CA 94527-1966
Phone: (925) 676-7543 x204
E-mail: ljohnson@ccfb.org

Marin County Food Policy Council
P.O. Box 101
Lagunitas CA 94938
Phone: (415) 488-9464
Fax: (415) 488-0600
E-mail: janet@ecoliteracy.org
www.slideranch.org

Pasadena Food Policy Council
Marc Saenz
Phone: (626) 744-6163

Placer County Food Policy Council
Martha Jacoby, Program Representative
University of California Cooperative
Extension Food Security Project
Phone: (530) 889-7350
E-mail: mejacob@ucdavis.edu.
[http://ceplacer.ucdavis.edu/Nutrition,
_Family_and_Consumer_Sciences/](http://ceplacer.ucdavis.edu/Nutrition,_Family_and_Consumer_Sciences/)

Sacramento Hunger Commission
909 12th Street, Suite 200
Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: (916) 447-7063, ext. 335 or 331
Fax: (916) 447-7052
www.targethunger.com

West Contra Costa County Food
Security Council
Melody Steeples
Community Wellness & Prevention
Program
597 Center Avenue, #115
Martinez, CA 94553
Phone: (925) 313-6839
Fax: (925) 313-6840
www.ccprevention.org

Connecticut

City of Hartford Advisory Commission
on Food Policy
Contact Jennifer Martin
Hartford Food System
(860) 296-9325
E-mail: info@hartfordfood.org
www.hartfordfood.org (Click on
.Programs.)

Connecticut Food Policy Council
Dept. of Agriculture
765 Asylum Ave.
Hartford, CT 06105-2822
www.foodpc.state.ct.us

966 E. 800 Rd.
Lawrence, KS 66047
785.748.0959
F: 785.748.0609
www.kansasruralcenter.org

Illinois

Illinois Food Policy Council
Mark Beorkrem
Executive Director,
Illinois Stewardship Alliance
P.O. Box 648
114 E. Main
Rochester, Illinois 62420
Ph: 217/498-9707
Fax: 217/498-9235
www.illinoisstewardshipalliance.org/

Massachusetts

Holyoke Food Policy Council
Mary Anne Carrasquillo, Food Policy
Council Coordinator
Planning Department
City Hall Annex Room 406
Holyoke, Mass 01040
Phone: 413-322-5575
Fax: 413-322-5576

Iowa

Drake Agricultural Law Center Staff &
Legal Research Associates
Christine Pardee
State Food Policy Council Project
Coordinator & Iowa Food Policy
Council Coordinator
Agricultural Law Center
The Law School
Drake University
2507 University Ave.
Des Moines, Iowa 50311
515.271.4956
F: 515.271.1965

Minnesota

Twin-Cities Food Policy Council
Christopher B. Morton
Executive Director,
Minnesota Food Association
3502 32nd Ave. NE
St. Anthony, MN 55418
612.788.4342
F: 612.788.4344
www.mnfoodassociation.org

Iowa Food Policy Council
Christine Pardee, Council Coordinator
Ag Law Center, Drake University
Des Moines, IA 50311
Phone: (515) 271-4956
Fax: (515) 271-2530
E-mail: christine.pardee@drake.edu
www.iowafoodpolicy.org

Mexico

New Mexico Food and Agriculture
Policy Council (a project of Farm to
Table)
Pamela Roy
Farm to Table
3900 Paseo del Sol
Santa Fe, NM 87507
Phone: (505) 473-1004
Fax: (505) 424-1144
E-mail: pamelaroy@aol.com

Kansas

Salina Regional Food Policy Council
Dan Nagengast
Consultant,
Kansas Rural Center

North Carolina

<http://www.kornet.org/kfpc/>
North Carolina Food Policy Council
Gary Gay
North Carolina Department of
Agriculture
P.O. Box 659
Butner, NC 27509

Phone: (919) 575-4490
E-mail: gary.gay@ncmail.net

Oklahoma

Oklahoma State Food Policy Council
Jim Horne, Co-Chair; or Anita Poole,
Project Coordinator
Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture
Inc.
Box 588
Poteau, Oklahoma 74953
Phone: (918) 647-9123
Fax: (918) 647-8712
jhorne@kerrcenter.com
apoole@kerrcenter.com

Oregon

City of Portland-Multnomah County
Food Policy Council
Matt Emlen
Community Relations Specialist
City of Portland, Office of
Sustainable Development
721 NW 9th Avenue STE 350
Portland, OR 97209
503.823.7224
www.sustainableportland.org

FOOD for Lane County
Susan Bowie
Community Food Advocate
770 Bailey Hill Road
Eugene, OR 97402
Phone: (541) 343-2822
Fax: (541) 343-5019
E-mail: sbowie@foodforlanecounty.org

Pennsylvania

Philadelphia Food Marketing Task
Force
Duane Perry
The Food Trust
1201 Chestnut St.
Philadelphia, PA 19107
Phone: (215) 568-0830
E-mail: duane@thefoodtrust.org

Tennessee

Knoxville/Knox County Food Policy
Council
Gail Harris
P.O. Box 51650
Knoxville, TN 37950-1650
Phone: (423) 546-3500
E-mail: gail.harris@doleta.sprint.com
www.kornet.org/kfpc

Utah

Utah Food Strategy Team
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350 N. Redwood Road
Salt Lake City, UT
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 146500
Salt Lake City, UT 84114-6500
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Washington

Tahoma Food System
Mail: P.O. Box 64801
University Place, WA 98464
Fax: (253) 475-3663
E-mail: staff@tahomafoodsystem.org
www.tahomafoodsystem.org

Washington State Food Policy Council
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Olympia, WA 98504
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