Getting fresh local produce to kids and seniors

EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS WITH THE FARM-TO-TABLE PARTNERSHIP IN KING COUNTY, WA

American Public Health Association Conference October 30, 2012
Farm to Table is a Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) initiative made possible by funding from the Department of Health and Human Services and Public Health Seattle-King County through Communities Putting Prevention to Work (CPPW).

Photo credits:
Northwest Agriculture Business Center
and WA State Dept. of Agriculture
1. Project Objectives
2. Assessment & Training
3. Purchase & Delivery Models
4. Challenges & Successes
5. Questions
Project Objectives

- Increase access/affordability of fresh produce for senior meal programs by developing procurement models with local farms
- Assess readiness and provide training/tools to help senior meal programs use more fresh local produce
- Assess feasibility of procurement models for home and center based childcare programs

Training retreat for Muckleshoot Indian Tribe cooks.
NW Agriculture Business Center

WA State Dept of Agriculture, Farm to School

King County Housing Authority

Muckleshoot Indian Tribe

Senior Services

Catholic Community Services of Western WA

Lifelong AIDS Alliance, Chicken Soup Brigade

Seattle Human Services Dept., Aging & Disability Services / Youth & Family Empowerment

Seattle Parks & Recreation

Coalition for Safety Health and Early Learning

Farm to Table Partners

U.S. Deputy Secretary of Agriculture, Kathleen Merrigan, visits the Central Area Senior Center, a Farm to Table pilot site.
March 2, 2011.
Meet People Where They Are

- Extensive on-site assessments for 3 senior meal programs
- Survey and focus group for childcare providers
- Facility and equipment inventory, assessment of staff capacity, skills, and program readiness
- Reassessment as staff and program models shift
Make the Healthy Choice the Easy Choice

- Cooking demonstrations & skill building sessions
- Seasonality Charts
- Recipe Bank
- Marketing Materials
  - Table tents at senior meals
  - “Backpack mail” for childcare programs
  - Video Stories

The first Farm to Table delivery, February 2011. Staff from the Chicken Soup Brigade receive leeks from 21 Acres Farm.
One Size Doesn’t Fit All

- Farm to Site – direct delivery
- Food Service Distributor
- Food Aggregation – two or more sites combine orders
- Community Food Hub “Good Food Bag”
- CSA Models – closed and open sites
- Online Procurement and Farm Aggregation
## Challenges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility/Program Issues</th>
<th>Staff/People</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Minimum order requirements</td>
<td>• Can’t get everything from the farm. Extra time for multiple sourcing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Delivery days/times</td>
<td>• Additional prep and cooking time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Storage and processing capacity</td>
<td>• Time for staff training and development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Budget – a new way of allocating costs for some providers</td>
<td>• Communication (e.g., access to email for both farmers and cooks)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Impact of weather on product selection and availability</td>
<td>• Attitudes and cultural barriers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Successes

More programs are cooking from scratch and using fewer processed foods.

Increased job satisfaction from staff who enjoy “real cooking” and serving healthy nutritious meals.

Participants of all ages like the fresh produce and learning about where it came from.

Seniors enjoy eating foods they grew up with, and kids have fun trying strange new vegetables with funny names -- Rutabaga.

It’s All About Relationships

Senior Congregate Meal program staff accept a delivery of potatoes from Ralph’s Greenhouse.
Unanticipated Successes and Spin-Offs

Wal-Mart Foundation Grant funded 8,000 bags of produce for summer “out-of-school” lunch program

“Good Food Bag”

Tahoma Farms developed custom “Healthy Kids Box” for their CSA members

Program staff making positive changes to their personal eating and cooking habits

Elderly participants report eating healthier food outside the center

Cooking skills training for childcare providers.
Myth busting at Prospect Preschool
Green vegetables + Kids = Fun
For More Information

MARIA LANGLAIS, AGING & DISABILITY SERVICES
SEATTLE HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT
maria.langlais@seattle.gov  206-684-0651
www.agingkingcounty.org

LUCY NORRIS, NW AGRICULTURE BUSINESS CENTER
Lucy@psfn.org  360-336-3666
agbizcenter.org
www.psfn.org/farm-to-institution/
Presenter Disclosures

Maria Langlais

(1) The following personal financial relationships with commercial interests relevant to this presentation existed during the past 12 months:

No Disclosures