

GROW/FEED SUBCOMMITTEE
Governor's Council on Food Security
Draft Minutes
June 29, 2017

The Governor's Council on Food Security (GCFS) held a public meeting on June 29, 2017, beginning at approximately 1:15 P.M. at the following locations:

Division of Public and Behavioral Health
4150 Technology Way Room 303
Carson City, NV 89706

Southern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services
6161 W. Charleston, East Hall
Las Vegas, NV 89146

Board Members Present

Christy McGill, Director, Safe and Respectful Learning Environments, Nevada Department of Education (NDE)
Annmarie Feiler, Executive Director, Urban Seed Foundation
Dorian Stonebarger, Program Director, Three Square Food Bank
Shane Piccinini, Government Relations, Food Bank of Northern Nevada (FBNN)
Diane Hogan, MS, RDN, LD, Nutrition Programs Professional, Nevada Department of Agriculture (NDA)

Board Members Not Present

Kathleen Sandoval, First Lady of Nevada

Also Present

Karissa Loper, Deputy Bureau Chief, Bureau of Child, Family and Community Wellness (CFCW), Division of Public and Behavioral Health (DPBH)
Jennifer Bonk, Section Manager, Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (CDPHP), CFCW, DPBH
Michelle Walker, Section Manager, Women, Infants and Children (WIC), CFCW, DPBH
Laura Urban, Food Security and Wellness Manager, CDPHP, CFCW, DPBH
Patrick Petrie, Social Services Specialist III, Office of Community Partnerships and Grants, Directors Office, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)
David Ramirez-Silva, WIC Program Officer 1, CFCW, DPBH
Steve Litsinger, Treasurer, Basin and Range Organics
Marcia Litsinger, Vice Chair, Basin and Range Organics

1. Call to Order, Roll Call, and Announcements

Christy McGill, vice-chair, called the meeting to order at 1:15 P.M.

Roll call was taken, and it was determined a quorum of the Governor's Council on Food Security (GCFS) Grow/Feed Subcommittee was present.

2. Overview of Subcommittee Goal

At the May 19th GCFS meeting, the Council motioned for the creation of the LEAD/REACH and GROW/FEED Subcommittees. The Subcommittees are tasked with reviewing and updating the document, *Food Security in Nevada: Nevada's Plan for Action*, and to make priority recommendations to the GCFS.

3. Provide updates on FEED goals and strategies and make recommendations for *Food Security in Nevada: Nevada's Plan for Action*.

FEED Goal #1: Maximize participation in each federal nutrition program available to the state.

1a: Feed more children through increased participation in in-school meal programs and establish accountability measures.

Prior to the meeting, NDA provided School Breakfast Program and National School Lunch Program data, as well as a statement on the success of Senate Bill (SB) 503. Both are included in the Subcommittee worksheet. The Subcommittee did not have additional updates or comments.

1b: Expand partnerships between regional food banks and commodities programs to effectively utilize and deliver all United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) commodity programs along with fresh produce.

Ms. McGill stated there has been an increase in fresh produce in pantries across Nevada.

The Subcommittee suggested using the indicator of pounds of fresh produce distributed through food banks as a measure for this activity; in total, and specifically through commodities, if possible. Ms. McGill suggested reaching out to the Food Banks and NDA for data.

Ms. McGill suggested this activity continue.

1c: Create a strategic partnership between WIC and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to maximize caseloads.

Michelle Walker stated WIC and SNAP are working on a data analysis project to ensure WIC-eligible SNAP participants are referred to WIC, and vice-versa.

Ms. McGill asked if joint WIC/SNAP eligibility has been achieved.

Ms. Walker stated it is not currently possible due to differences in WIC and SNAP data systems. SNAP was awarded funding this past legislative session to update their data collection system to one that can share data across programs.

Ms. McGill asked if this should remain an activity.

Ms. Walker confirmed it should.

Ms. McGill asked if Ms. Walker would be the point of contact for this activity.

Ms. Walker stated she will facilitate between WIC and SNAP.

Ms. McGill suggested a new priority of increasing senior participation in SNAP and other nutrition programs.

1d: Create partnerships and sponsorships to feed more children through out-of-school meal programs and daycare centers using the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and Summer Food Service Program (SFSP).

CACFP and SFSP data was provided to members prior to the meeting and is included in the Subcommittee worksheet. The Subcommittee agreed more work needs to be done to address this activity.

Ms. McGill suggested having a representative from NDA present on this data at a future GCFS meeting.

1e: Replicate effective models to increase rural capacity for children's out of school meal programs.

Ms. McGill suggested having a representative from NDA to present on this data at a future GCFS meeting.

1f: Assist school districts and charter schools with implementing the state's wellness policy and support the Office of Child Nutrition Program's enforcement of the policy.

Ms. Urban stated the NDA and CDPHP School Wellness Program collaborate to support implementation of state and local school wellness policies. NDA will be issuing a report on districts' implementation in August 2017.

Ms. McGill requested the report results be included as an update.

Annmarie Feiler stated Urban Seed Foundation approved a \$23,000 grant for Somerset Academy to establish the largest school garden in North Las Vegas. A Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) garden curriculum was also developed by Three Square Food Bank, Garden Fames, Green our Planet, and the Clark County School District (CCSD). The curriculum includes a regularly scheduled farmers market. This initiative aligns with Somerset Academy's goals for implementing a school wellness policy.

Ms. McGill stated there are several certified school gardens throughout Nevada. She added that all Lyon County schools have a certified garden and the produce is served in the classroom and/or the lunchroom.

Steve Litsinger stated excess produce from the Lyon County School District gardens are donated to the local food bank.

Marcia Litsinger emphasized the need for administration involvement in school gardens. Maintenance and sustainability issues are common.

Ms. McGill stated school gardens align with GROW goals and the Nevada Legislature passed a bill to provide funding for school gardens. This funding will be available between September and October 2017. She suggested exploring school gardens' impact on increased fruit and vegetable consumption among children.

Ms. Feiler suggested data-sharing among agencies implementing school gardens, and the development and implementation of a statewide school garden survey. Results can be used to produce a report. She emphasized the importance of collecting consistent data so it can be analyzed and used to support policy recommendations/changes.

The Subcommittee agreed to add this as a priority.

FEED Goal #2: Establish and integrate an actual or virtual "one-stop-shop" system to increase access to food and other services for food insecure Nevadans.

2a: Increase the number of service providers and places within a community and neighborhood to increase access points to healthy food by food insecure people who may be ineligible for federal nutrition programs.

The Subcommittee suggested the following indicators for this activity: number of pantries, number of school gardens per county, number of farmer's markets accepting SNAP benefits, number of senior farmer's market coupons used compared to number issued, and number of food hubs.

Ms. Feiler stated Urban Seed Foundation will be developing an asset map for the city of Las Vegas. The map will include various resources including farmer's markets, food deserts, food pantries, and SNAP/WIC office locations.

Ms. McGill suggested layering the Las Vegas asset map over the Three Square food insecurity map.

Ms. Urban stated the Office of Food Security (OFS) is working on a SNAP-Education (SNAP-Ed) proposal to create a statewide food asset map. It was established the OFS would collaborate with the Urban Seed Foundation on this project.

Ms. Litsinger mentioned the Great Basin Community Co-Op Round Up Program. This program gives shoppers the option of "rounding up" their purchase as a donation to help families in need. The program aims to increase access to fruits and vegetables and teach low-income families how to prepare healthy meals.

Ms. McGill suggesting having the Co-Op present on this program at a future GCFS meeting.

The Subcommittee decided this remains an activity.

2b: Assess and implement a single, statewide database that integrates with other information and service systems (e.g., 2-1-1, Federal Nutrition Programs, etc.).

An update for this activity was included in the worksheet provided at the meeting.

Ms. McGill suggested having 2-1-1 present on their strategic plan at a future GCFS meeting.

The Subcommittee decided this remains an activity.

2c: Collaborate with the Consumer Assistance Committee of the Silver State Health Insurance Exchange on a single point entry/application process for multiple assistance programs across systems.

Per the update provided in the worksheet, the Consumer Assistance Committee no longer exists, and food security is currently not within the scope of the Silver State Health Insurance Exchange.

The Subcommittee discussed the importance of using Community Health Workers (CHWs) at local health centers.

Ms. McGill suggested 2c should be broader. She recommended contacting Chuck Duarte at Community Health Alliance (CHA) for input on revising this activity.

2d: Strengthen partnerships and increase efficiency to implement a "one-stop-shop" for all assistance programs.

Pat Petrie, who oversees the hunger one-stop-shop grant, stated five agencies will be awarded funding for the 2018 fiscal year. The goal of the grant is to identify strategies for overcoming barriers to self-efficiency among at-risk populations, and to refer qualifying clients using programs such as SNAP, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), community resources, and after school programs. The number of people served and number of meals provided through this grant has steadily increased over the past three (3) years.

Ms. McGill requested the hunger one-stop-shop grant data be included in the next update and suggested Mr. Petrie present on 2017 data at a future GCFS meeting.

2e: Expand partnerships linked to a "one-stop-shop" to address risk factors that increase food security.

Mr. Petrie added partnerships and collaboration are a grant requirement. The annual hunger one-stop-shop report includes data on the number of referrals and successful linkages.

Mr. Litsinger mentioned the need for collaboration with local sheriff's departments to appropriately route people in need to social workers and food resource programs.

Ms. McGill mentioned the Southern Nevada Health District 9-1-1 Referral Program.

Ms. McGill suggested adding an activity on training first responders to do referrals for social and food resources.

MS. MCGILL ENTERTAINED A MOTION TO ACCEPT THE UPDATES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR "FEED" GOALS. MR. PICCININI MADE A MOTION. MS. FIELER SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

4. Provide updates on GROW goal and strategies and make recommendations for *Food Security in Nevada: Nevada's Plan for Action*.

GROW Goal #1: Increase the number of servings of nutritious foods consumed by Nevadans - with emphasis on foods that are produced in Nevada.

1a: Encourage local producers to establish aggregation centers to increase retail and wholesale sales.

Ms. Litsinger stated there are food hubs in Tahoe (Nevada side), Fallon, Reno (drop program), and Carson City.

Number of food hubs and food co-ops was suggested as an indicator for this activity.

Ms. McGill was happy to report an increase in the number of co-ops and food hubs in Northern Nevada since the creation of the Plan. In 2013, there was one co-op and one food hub in Northern Nevada; now, there are three (3) co-ops and five (5) food hubs.

Mr. Litsinger stated David Perry with Nevada Fresh Pak now sends a produce truck directly to Reno. Farmers like Rick Lattin get their produce picked-up via the drop program. Smaller farmers take their produce directly to the co-ops.

Ms. McGill suggested having Great Basin Co-Op (Reno) present on their drop program at a future GCFS meeting.

1b: Support and expand model programs and partnerships (e.g., school gardens, community gardens, and small food plots) to supplement a household's supply of fresh produce or encourage entrepreneurial efforts, with a focus on individuals utilizing the food security network.

Ms. McGill suggested the indicator of number of school gardens and number of certified gardens. NDA can provide this data.

Ms. Feiler suggested the indicator of number of school gardens with a district-approved curriculum that addresses execution and maintenance. Ms. McGill asked that Ms. Feiler share the CCSD garden curriculum discussed earlier.

Ms. Feiler stated Urban Seed has developed a sustainability agreement to accompany the curriculum. She will share this as well.

Ms. Litsinger stated there are many partners working to integrate school gardens into the curriculum. She will be attending an edible school garden training, where a curriculum will be provided.

Ms. McGill suggested pooling these curriculums and creating a "treasure chest" of resources for teachers and school administrators.

Ms. Litsinger mentioned Reno organizations with community gardens such as RISE and the Eddie Project. She stated community gardens need more support, especially from the Parks Department. Spraying [pesticides] in public parks has been an issue.

Ms. McGill mentioned there are also community gardens at food pantries.

Mr. Litsinger expressed the concern that Americans have forgotten where their food comes from, as well as how to prepare fresh healthy food. It is important to educate the public on both. This can be accomplished, in part, through school gardens. He has found the entire family benefits from a school garden program.

Ms. McGill asked the members to send community and school garden resources to Ms. Urban.

1c: Develop a food asset map (inventory) to catalog existing food resources and potential resources in the state that could be leveraged further.

The Subcommittee decided this will remain an activity, as both Urban Seed Foundation and the OFS are planning/implementing asset mapping projects.

1d: Analyze the asset map, prioritize, and recommend investment and collaboration opportunities to increase food security and its economic impact.

The Subcommittee decided to include this as an action item once the asset map mentioned in 1c is complete.

1e: Use identified aggregation, processing, and distribution capacity to pilot the utilization of local foods into the food security networks and Nevada institutions (e.g., Farm to School, Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, etc.).

Ms. McGill suggested contacting Catrina Peters with the NDA about the farm to school strategy.

Ms. Litsinger stated Basin Range Organics now has a livestock program. They handle and process fruits and vegetables in addition to livestock and wild crops. They currently have three (3) full-time inspectors and are willing to help with certification in Las Vegas, as needed.

Mr. Litsinger stated there is not a local USDA organic meat processor and kill facility. Wolf Pack Meats is a USDA-certified processor, but is not interested in expanding to get organic certification. Even if the livestock comes from an organic farm, once it enters Wolf Pack Meats facility, it is no longer organic. Basin Range Organics cannot grow their program without a local USDA-certified organic processor and kill facility.

Ms. McGill reiterated the need for improvement of local food certification in Nevada. Nevada can now certify fruits and vegetables, grains, crops, livestock, process and handling, and wild crops. This is important because it is nonprofit governmental partnerships that keep local food costs low.

Ms. Feiler asked about the statewide fund allocated for school garden programs and where she can get more information.

Mr. Piccinini stated the bill he's referring to is SB 167.

Ms. Feiler commented on SB 429 which creates provisions for urban agriculture.

1f: Work with producers and other stakeholders to identify and address barriers preventing the production, sale, and use or expansion of local foods.

Ms. Litsinger stated fresh packed greens could always be processed in Nevada; the problem was distribution, resulting in the produce being sent to California. The only barriers to local products getting into the market is the producer, and the lack of the kill facility for meat products.

Ms. McGill suggested reaching out to the NDA to learn about common barriers in distribution of local goods.

Mr. Litsinger stated US Foods is working with local producers to help distribute goods.

Ms. McGill has heard complaints around the lack of infrastructure support in Southern Nevada around organic certification. She stated farmers feel like there is a lot of “red tape” to navigate.

Ms. Litsinger stated she held a certification training in Las Vegas but there was not a lot of interest. She is happy to provide a training if there is interest.

Ms. Feiler stated there have been significant hold-ups with permitting for their Wynn Road location. She confirmed there are many barriers urban farmers face specifically, particularly around permitting and zoning regulations; once they overcome these barriers, it will pave the way for growth in the urban agricultural market.

It was recommended this remain an activity.

1g: Develop an education and marketing plan to encourage consumption of nutritious, local foods, focused on individuals who utilize the food security network.

Ms. Stonebarger stated the education and marketing portion of 1g should remain an activity.

The group decided to include the following language into the activity, “Identify, support, and share marketing plans...”

Ms. Stonebarger mentioned there are several SNAP-Ed programs throughout the state providing education on healthy eating.

Ms. McGill suggested promoting the senior farmer’s market coupon program.

The group suggested changing the language of the activity to “emphasize local foods.”

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5. Identify action items and goals for second Subcommittee meeting.

The group decided to have a second meeting. Ms. Urban will provide updates for the Plan, determine member availability and scheduling, and draft the agenda for the second meeting.

6. Public Comment

No public comment was given during this meeting.

7. Adjournment

Christy McGill adjourned the meeting at 3:12 PM.