

Sustainable Food Systems: Your Role as the Nutrition Expert

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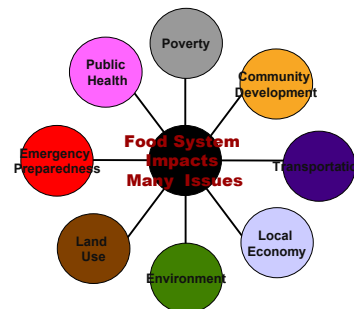
In the Memory of Patricia Ann Manuele, MS, RD, CD



Learning Objectives:

1. Describe emerging trends in nutrition
2. Understand the implications of farm to institution in the context of the food system and health

The Food System Ties Issues Together



Branden Born - UW Urban Planning

Emerging Trends in Nutrition

- Local/Regional foods
- Seasonal foods
- Organic foods
- Sustainable agriculture
- Food and water safety

Going Green

- Gourmet Magazine
- Cooking Well
- The New York Times Magazine
- Dietitian Today

Locavores

People who are dedicated to the concept of eating locally – limiting the access of food to a place.

“Local” is usually anywhere from between one to one hundred miles.

Local/Regional Foods

- Fresher
- More nutritious
- Support local economy
- Support farm families
- Reduce your carbon footprint

Seasonal foods

- Buy and consume foods that are in season
- Make the current season the basis for your menu planning and food choices for all year long.
- More nutrients

*****Do you know what's in season today?***

Washington's Spring Harvest

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| • Asparagus | • Mushrooms |
| • Bamboo shoots | • Turnips |
| • Beets | • Apples (stored) |
| • Carrots | • Apricots |
| • Broccoli | • Winter Pears |
| • Cauliflower | • Rhubarb |
| • Cabbage | • Strawberries (just around the corner!) |

Organic Foods

- Organic foods are grown without the use of synthetic pesticides
 - Standards for organic production are regulated by the USDA
- Fastest growing segment of the food industry

What are Organic Foods?

- Organic food is produced by farmers who emphasize the use of renewable resources and the conservation of soil and water to enhance environmental quality for future generations
- Organic meat, poultry, eggs, and dairy products come from animals that are given no antibiotics or growth hormones
- Organic food is produced without using most conventional pesticides; fertilizers made with synthetic ingredients or sewage sludge; bioengineering; or ionizing radiation.



Organic Foods: Safer and Healthier?

- Benefits to Consumers
 - Higher levels of antioxidants
 - Reduced exposure to pesticides
 - Improved flavor
- Risks
 - Using unprocessed organic fertilizer may transmit bacteria to humans
 - Need more research to determine nutritional benefits



How do *You* Play a Role?



Get in Involved in Sustainable Food Systems Work

- Make connections with local farmers
 - Farm to Institution
- Join or work with your local food policy council
- Join with others to form a local food policy council
- Advocate for RD's participation within the broader food system context
- Grow your own food

Farm to Institution

- Promote sustainability and health through local sourcing of healthful foods
- Various contexts:
 - Schools/Universities
 - Hospitals
 - Long-term care facilities
 - Prisons
 - Emergency food system

Local Farms-Healthy Kids Bill (SB6483)

- Signed into law by Governor Gregoire on Thursday, March 27th, 2008
- A win for both Washington farmers and Washington's most vulnerable residents (children, low income families, and seniors)
- It will increase the amount of local food that is consumed in our schools, from our farmers markets, and available at our food banks.
- \$1.49 million budget

Local Farms-Healthy Kids Bill

Provides an additional \$100,000 for the WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) and an additional \$100,000 for the Senior FMNP.

Establishes a Farm to School Program that will facilitate the purchasing of Washington-grown farm products by schools

Eases purchasing restrictions for school districts and state entities so that buying locally grown food is easier

Creates the Washington Grown Fresh Fruit and Vegetable program to get locally grown fruits and vegetables in schools for snacks in addition to breakfast and lunch

Local Farms-Healthy Kids Bill

Promotes school gardens

Provides \$50,000 to purchase wireless technology that will allow Farmers Markets to accept EBT cards

Establishes three Farm to food Bank pilot programs that will get fresh, locally grown food into food banks

What is a food policy council?

- A form of civic engagement
- A diverse array of stakeholders
- A group of people reviewing and developing food, agriculture, **and** health policy to make recommendations
- A comprehensive approach to improving a food system



Several communities in Washington are exploring this concept: Seattle, King County, Clallam County, Pierce County, and others.

A Food Policy Council for Seattle and King County



Promoting a food system for healthier people, a healthy environment and a vital local economy

Acting Food Policy Council for Seattle and King County

Mission:

To partner with community, business, agriculture and government to develop integrated policy and action for a food system that supports healthy people, communities, economies and environment.

Goals for our food system:

- Access to healthy foods for all
- Social and environmental justice from seed to table
- Economic health alongside environmental health – community food security

Key Elements of a Local Food Strategy

- Ensure healthful food in all neighborhoods.
- Increase locally and regionally-sourced foods.
- Strengthen our food recovery network.
- Develop capacity for future food system improvements in coordination with a Food Policy Council.

Resource: National Association of Counties - Counties and Local Food Systems report

Many Communities Are Taking Action

Seattle – Toronto - San Francisco - Portland - Vancouver, BC

- Dedicated Staff
- Food Policy Councils
- Comprehensive Plans to Strengthen Regional Food Systems with Common Elements:
 - Improve Child Nutrition with Farm to School Links
 - Support for Regional Producers to Access City Markets
 - Address Food Access
 - Encourage Institutional Procurement
 - Integrate Food Concerns into Land Use Planning
 - Involve Community Members in Assessments

Breaking News: Seattle City Council Passes Local Food Action Initiative

- Regional Food Policy Council
- Expand resources for food banks
- Strengthen local farmers' markets
- Develop solutions that will reduce the cost of food for urban consumers by making stronger connections between our rural and urban areas
- Plan for better management of the food system in emergencies and disasters
- Develop a Food Policy Action Plan which will identify policies, programs and opportunities to promote local food system sustainability and security

Dietitians played key roles in passing this initiative

Dietitians are Nutrition Experts

- Child Nutrition
- Aging
- Food and Food Safety
- Health Literacy and Nutrition Advancement
- Medical Nutrition Therapy
- Nutrition Monitoring and Research
- Obesity/Overweight/Healthy Weight Management
- Hunger and Malnutrition
- Sustainable Food Systems
- AND MANY OTHER AREAS!!

Actions You Can Take

- Write to and call your lawmakers
- Testify at local hearings
 - Local Economy
 - Climate Pollution
 - Food in the Waste Stream
 - Hunger & Health
 - Neighborhood Inequities

Actions You Can Take

- Join a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) co-op
- Participate in local food events
 - Puget Sound Fresh's *Local Thanksgiving*
- Grow your own food
- Take a gardening class
- Share food with your neighbors



Have fun
Get your hands
dirty
Chew
Taste
Share
Enjoy!

Food For Thought



Your fork is a powerful weapon!

Thank you to members of the Seattle/King County Acting Food Policy Council
for contributing information to this presentation.

Resources

ADA's Hunger and Environmental Dietetic Practice Group
www.hendpg.org/

Community Food Security Coalition
www.foodsecurity.org/

Washington State Cooperative Extension

Seattle/King County Acting Food Policy Council
<http://king.wsu.edu/foodandfarms/foodpolicycouncil.htm>

Seattle Tilth
www.seattletilth.org

Reading:

Omnivore's Dilemma, by Michael Pollan

Animal, Vegetable, Miracle, By Barbara Kingsolver

Plenty: One Man, One Woman, and a Raucous Year of Eating

Locally, by Alisa Smith and JB Mackinnon

Viewing:

Table Land

King Korn