

THE LONG HAUL: FOOD POLICY APPROACHES IN LOS
ANGELES, THEN AND NOW

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Executive Summary

Food systems affect each and every resident of the planet. They are inescapable, and can make or break populations. The food within them brings sustenance, and can bring joy, pleasure, and community connections. However, the many advances humans have made in technology have not always been kind to our food systems, and more recently have served to drive communities and individuals apart. These divides have led to some very unhealthy consequences, including the advent of nutritionally useless processed foods, obesity, diabetes, and others.

Los Angeles is part of a vast regional food system that has been in trouble for quite some time. Planning and policy are tools that can be used to help rebuild a healthier system, but many groups already working on food related issues have chosen to focus more narrowly on specific communities and concerns. In order for the food system in Los Angeles to improve, work must be done to coordinate the efforts of these existing groups, and eventually to give them more weight in government. Food Policy Councils (FPCs) have sprung up around the country to attempt to do just this, and Los Angeles, through its Food Policy Task Force, is currently examining the potential effects of establishing such a body here.

I focused the research for this paper on Hartford, CT as an example of a food system that has benefited from coordinated efforts working in harmony to better its food system, and on Los Angeles as a case study in progress, looking specifically at the city's failed attempt at establishing a FPC in the 1990s and the reasons for its demise, and what its next steps should now be. From these two instances, I have determined that the next step for the City and County should be to begin by

designating a few professionals in the field as coordinators, and task them with synthesizing the existing work being done in every realm of the food system. This will help to identify areas of overlap as well as gaps in the framework that need to be addressed. From there, Los Angeles can develop a more policy-centric approach that should eventually evolve into a regional Department of Food. Through this phased approach, Los Angeles should be able to achieve its goal of becoming a national leader in food policy development, and more importantly, it will begin to better its ailing food system.

Glossary

FPC: Food Policy Council

VACH: The Voluntary Advisory Council on Hunger, present in Los Angeles from 1993-1996.

LAFSHP: The Los Angeles Food Security and Hunger Partnership, present in Los Angeles from 1996-1999.

LAFPTF: The Los Angeles Food Policy Task Force, present in Los Angeles from November of 2009-June of 2010.

Individual and General Background

Beginning with trips to a local farm for a basket of produce once every other week in the summers of my childhood, to the last nearly seven years working for a small catering business, and continuing through an unending love of fresh ingredients and putting them together, food has played a prominent and very special role in my life. The care and thought my parents put into my meals growing up inspired me to want to share this kind of dedication with others, a notion which was furthered in learning to cook more professionally from Anna Belcher at her gourmet catering and takeaway shop a few blocks from my home in New Haven, Connecticut. My family and friends have generally shared this passion for food, and thus most of my happy memories have it at their center. The desire to cook and bake for those around me, instilling an appreciation for good food in them, has never left me either, and has led me more recently to think about how this can be done on a much greater scale, and not only through cooking; I began to see policy and legislation as tools more useful than pots and pans in this endeavor.

My desires to learn to better see the food system as a whole, and to learn to be a successful agent of change within it have expressed themselves more clearly in the last few years, primarily as a result of living in Los Angeles. As an almost incomprehensibly huge area, it has mystified me in many ways, from its difficult-to-navigate and inconvenient public transit system, to its glaring displays of inequality, to the initial impression it can provide newcomers of finding themselves in a place devoid of a center- geographic or otherwise. Upon arrival, I knew not what to do with myself, how to have an impact or become a part of something here, never

having been one to join clubs or feel at home on a campus. Desiring that illusive point from which inspiration and meaning spring, I tried different classes and activities, finding a comfortable yet challenging resting spot in the Urban and Environmental Policy Department, which led me to my community organizing internship at Hunger Action LA (HALA). It was here that I began to put together a few of the pieces of the giant puzzle that is public service work in Los Angeles.

Working with Frank Tamborello brought me a new understanding of devoting one's life to one's work. He is truly an inspiration, as he is never without a smile or enough time to illuminate an issue for a newcomer to the field. Working at HALA was a hodgepodge of tasks, to say the least; Frank attacks from every angle at once, from directing someone to the nearest DPSS office, to broad hunger advocacy at the state level. He moves from meeting to meeting, sometimes in a church, sometimes in City Hall, always with the thought and perspective of those on behalf of whom he advocates- the hungry and the dispossessed. It was at one of HALA's monthly meetings that I learned of the newly devised Food Policy Task Force, created by Mayor Villaraigosa and Deputy Mayor Larry Frank, along with Occidental's UEPI, Paula Daniels of the City of Los Angeles' Department of Public Works, and the LA Conservation Corps. Knowing I would be writing a comprehensive senior research paper later this year, I took the opportunity presented and got involved.

Over the last six months, I have had the chance to meet various players in the food system--- farmers, advocates, policymakers, gardeners, educators, and many others--- who all desire to elevate their work by orchestrating a new landscape in

which to make a greater impact. I have seen what policy creation looks like from the ground up, the gritty process of negotiation and regular back and forth discussion of the ins and outs of everyday issues -I had thought it might be more glamorous (This was a revelation in and of itself- anyone really can make a difference, he or she just has to talk to the right -and enough- people). The Los Angeles Food Policy Task Force has begun again the complex process of putting stakeholders together to talk about how to make the area's food system better for more people, but this is only one of many steps, both preceding and following it.

Why is Better Food Policy Important?

This paper presumes the need and desire for a more effective and efficient food system in a region, but why? Especially in times of fiscal hardship at every level, this question is important to answer and understand, as those who do can help to educate others, including advocacy in government on behalf of the cause. The food system is still a mystery to many Americans, even though food issues have gotten increased publicity over the last few years. Being part of a somewhat self-centered nation, the average American's tendency is to think from an individualistic, rather than systemic, perspective. A prime example of this mindset are opinions on health issues like obesity, which can be exceedingly problematic. Many people consider that obese people have made poor dietary and lifestyle choices, implying that the choice to live healthy lives, including eating nutritious kinds and appropriate amounts of food, is made in a context devoid of outside influence, and also inferring that the healthy food choice is the easiest one. In fact, neither of these

suppositions is true. Advertising, family, peer pressure, culture, and a multitude of other influences inform the choices Americans make about what to eat, and thanks to the advent and takeover of processed “foods” with more chemicals than whole ingredients (usually a result of the unprecedented subsidies to corn and soybean growers), the healthy choice is almost always NOT the cheapest. In short, individuals make the easiest choices available to them, trusting that the greater forces of regulation and planning are at work, filtering out the junk, or at the very least, not making it so appealing, and when poor health consequences befall them, they themselves are blamed for making the wrong and the unhealthy choices.

Unfortunately, it is an almost invariable fallacy that the individual can make a choice outside of the existing framework. Excepting those living on farms and producing all of their food themselves, people in America are at the mercy of hundreds of intertwined systems, run by other people, and choices are preordained, for the most part. While this country continues to evolve extremely rapidly in most sectors, such as technology and medicine, our nation’s food system is an area in which we seem to have backtracked. Individuals are now stuck inside systems from which it can be very difficult to extricate themselves, especially in the realm of food. No longer do the majority of people in this country sustain themselves and their communities through farming, and many do not know where their food originates, as it arrives to them from so far away.

So, once again, why is it important to create better food policy? The end-of-days reasons are compelling enough: the rising use of GMOs; the potential incidence of superbugs (both insect and sickness) as a result of extremely harmful effects of

decades of insecticide, pesticide, and herbicide use; the increasing lack of knowledge of farming and cultivation practices. Or perhaps the immediate health consequences make an even better case: the obesity epidemic that is now plaguing roughly a third of the adults in the United States¹, along with the rapidly rising rate of diabetes: “11.3% of American adults-or about 26 million Americans- in...2009...If current trends continue, 15% of American adults-or more than 37 million Americans-will be living with diabetes by the end of 2015.”² Either way, it can no longer be argued that food choices are individual and removed from any larger framework or are without other consequence. Ideally this brief passage has provided some background and immediacy to the issues that are addressed by FPCs; just the creation and upkeep of and investment in FPCs signals that a city, county, region, or state has made an initial commitment to bettering its food system, and publicity of the FPC’s existence can generally serve to help educate citizens in its potential and meaning. It will take a huge investment in education of the public to change the current insistent and dangerous assumptions about the United States’ food system, and the development of Councils is an excellent step to take.

¹ (33.8% of adults in 2006-2008) *Prevalence and Trends in Obesity Among US Adults, 1999-2008*. Katherine M. Flegal, PhD; Margaret D. Carroll, MSPH; Cynthia L. Ogden, PhD; Lester R. Curtin, PhD

² Gallup, <http://www.gallup.com/poll/123887/u.s.-diabetes-rate-climbs-above-11-could-hit-15-2015.aspx>

Addressing the Problem

A common policy approach in cities to facilitate the coordination of existing efforts on food issues has been to create a Food Policy Council (FPC). FPCs have become popular and useful bodies in the undertaking of bringing better, healthier, and fresher food to more people in more places. Three very successful FPCs exist in Connecticut- in the capital city of Hartford (one of the first in the country), in New Haven, my hometown, and one at the state level, closely integrated with Hartford's Food Policy Council. Over the last thirty years, Hartford has worked with the state to start farmers' markets, increase participation in federal food assistance programs, help bring supermarkets to inner city areas, improve public transit routes to make these grocery stores more accessible³, and has started many other beneficial programs and services. Established more recently in 2005, New Haven's FPC has begun to do many of these same things. I have seen firsthand the benefits of having a FPC in my place of residence, mainly through the creation and expansion of farmers' markets in the New Haven area. These two FPCs have brought people working in various food-related areas together, to coordinate their efforts in order to achieve greater goals. While FPCs can be very useful tools, much thought and work must go into them for any good to come out.

FPCs are generally considered more useful solutions to creating better food policy than simply continuing the fragmented work done by various organizations, as they are bodies dedicated solely to this task. Most FPCs in North America exist at the city level, as this is a slightly more manageable than tackling policy making at

³ City of Hartford Advisory Commission on Food Policy
(<http://www.hartford.gov/government/FoodCommission/Activities.htm>)

the county, state, or regional level. However, this more narrow focus can be problematic; there are many issues involved in food policy that, to be improved upon, must really be tackled by a greater and more comprehensive approach. For example, a great majority of the food consumed in Los Angeles comes from farms outside the city and county limits; if the City imposes restrictions on its procurement policies (such as mandating a certain percentage of food served in City operated buildings to be local), the origins of the local food are not affected by the policies. Any kind of coordination efforts in relation to the emergency food system, as well as the creation of any sort of food hub must be regional to really be effective. Further discussion of this will be addressed later in the paper.

Another consideration about FPCs is that they do not always follow a prescribed format, as they shift their locus, leadership, goals, methods, etc. from city to city, depending on the existing circumstances, resources, and desires of the particular place. However, the existing FPCs generally do focus, at least in part, on policy evaluation and creation, even if they cannot actually instate the policy themselves. In beginning this research, and throughout the course of much of it, I held on to the assumption that if Los Angeles were to take another stab at creating a FPC, it would take shape with similar guidelines and organization to the LAFSHP, and most of the others around the country. Only after attending many Task Force meetings and listening sessions did I begin to consider that if Los Angeles really does want to become a pioneer in food issues, or even if it just wants to create a better and more sustainable food system for its residents, perhaps it must break out of the mold that has been sculpted by others around the country. While it might be

more difficult to do things differently here, it might be the only way to get all of the necessary stakeholders involved, and to create real change. This idea will be elaborated upon in the Recommendations section of the paper.

What's Wrong with How Our Food System Works?

Creation of food policy, as such a hugely broad and far-reaching issue, must involve all affected stakeholders in the discussion, in order for there to be a productive outcome.⁴ Past attempts to forge and implement a Los Angeles Food Policy Council have had limited success in meeting these stakeholder challenges, and currently, as the city works to identify effective ways to move forward through its Food Policy Task Force, this body and all the stakeholders must communicate and work together to bring everyone to the table and effectively lead the process to create good and useful policy and programs.

Typically, the different components of the food system include: production, processing, distribution, access, use, recycling, and waste.⁵ These different aspects of the system always overlap, but those who work in them do not. To create a sustainable and healthy regional food system, all of these players must communicate and coordinate. It is often especially difficult in the food system to facilitate this discussion, as the system is so broad, multi-faceted, and spread across a huge

⁴ This paper assumes the definition of “stakeholder” to be as follows: one who has a vested interest and active role in the food system; logically, this should then include absolutely everyone. However, because there is no easy way to distinguish between an active or passive consumer, citizens not part of an organization or other group with an active position in the food system will not be considered “stakeholders,” but rather as “consumers” or “community members” for the purpose of the paper.

⁵ Dahlberg, Kenneth. “Food Policy Councils: The Experience of Five Cities and One County.” p. 1

geographic area. Los Angeles is a particularly (and unfortunately) good example of this problem. Throughout its different stages, food falls under the control and jurisdiction of many different individuals and agencies, some of which likely know very little about the operations and policies of the others.

Potential Problems in Organizing Food Systems

On a broader level, advocates and policy makers who work on food-related issues can end up working at cross-purposes. For example, hunger advocates often focus on the emergency food system network, their main goal being to ensure that those unable to purchase food on their own can obtain it via food stamps, food pantries, soup kitchens, etc. These advocates and organizers usually focus on building up the infrastructure of this urgent needs-based system, with less of a focus on who might be providing the food to the distribution points, the nutritional quality of the food, or the level of fairness and equity with which the emergency food workers are treated. Often, the bottom line for these advocates is getting the food to the pantries, soup kitchens, etc. So when advocates for the equitable treatment of workers in the food system want to close a food pantry because of its unfair treatment of workers, the hunger advocates are likely to object, seeing this as an attack on the hungry, even if the bottom-line goal of the labor advocates is also to assist the disadvantaged. However, when people in these inextricably linked fields do not communicate on a regular basis and attempt to understand one another's bottom line, problems such as these inevitably arise, and often set back both parties.

The problems caused by these slight differences in operational paradigms can often be mitigated by the coordination of efforts by both sides, achieved through discussion and fusion of goals. This is one of the most important functions of the Food Policy Council-- to be the central body that connects all the various parts of the food system to one another, to glean information about what it is that the different people and groups want to see change, and to begin to make the change happen. Cities across North America have begun to reap the benefits of having these bodies in place, in different levels of government (some outside of), with varying amounts of power and influence.

Another factor that can slow or halt the progression of food policy work is a too-narrow focus. This was one of the issues that plagued the Los Angeles Food Security and Hunger Partnership (1996-1999), which will be discussed at greater length later in the paper. Often, this focal point is hunger prevention, food banks, and the rest of the emergency food system,⁶ a locus that diminishes the opportunity to create successful connections or coordinate efforts outside of this particular wing of the food system. One reason for this approach's narrow realm of possibility is that, while currently necessary, it remains somewhat of a band-aid to the larger problems plaguing the food system as a whole. Conversely, it can be (and is) argued that until broader social reform occurs and a much greater paradigm shift of social responsibility takes place at the federal and local government levels, the emergency food system framework will continue to be incredibly important, and thus it should

⁶ Mark Winne. Closing the Food Gap.

not be neglected in favor of other issues. This is quite a complex topic, and should be taken into consideration in the creation and work of FPCs everywhere.

Finally, a chicken-and-egg issue at play in the food policy world is the idea of a broader food movement, and what role its existence, or lack thereof, plays in the success or failure of FPCs. Certainly, when there is wide publicity and public awareness of a problem, it is easier for those working and advocating around that issue to make progress. However, that movement must be created somehow, and it is usually through just this work and advocacy that it is done. In the 1990s, the idea of a food movement was still marginal, and the obesity epidemic was only beginning. Thus, the public was not as likely to see food as an issue around which to organize, and as a result, they would not hold politicians accountable to legislate and work on related issues. Because of the work done on the margins for the last few decades, as well as because of the dramatic rise in the rates of obesity and diabetes, there is a veritable food movement today. The Farm to School program is present in over 1,000 school districts in 32 states;⁷ the First Lady of the United States has embarked on a personal campaign to bring healthier food to schools and homes; Jamie Oliver, a chef with a similar mission, now has his own program on a nationwide network at primetime;⁸ and the Department of Health and Human Services has pledged \$373 million of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act as the "'cornerstone funding' of the Recovery Act Community Prevention and

⁷ Community Food Security Coalition

http://www.foodsecurity.org/farm_to_school.html#need

⁸ Jamie Oliver's "Food Revolution"- <http://abc.go.com/shows/jamie-olivers-food-revolution>

Wellness Initiative.”⁹ While the idea of the food system is still somewhat fuzzy, if not completely incomprehensible to many Americans, a majority is now willing to admit that there are food-related problems.

One concern with FPCs is the methods with which they can measure success or failure. Because the issues addressed by these bodies are so broad and affect so many, it is very difficult to assess whether they are achieving their objectives (it is often problematic even to set quantifiable goals). Some measure accountability through annual reports to governmental bodies, some through program enrollment, some through the number of attendees at meetings or subscribers to their email lists.¹⁰ The people with whom I spoke who hold positions on FPCs told me that their Councils had not yet developed specific metrics for accountability or success, and that this was something they hoped to work on in the future.¹¹ This is an issue that seems, at least from the extent of research performed for this paper, to be one that must be resolved on a case-by-case basis, and cannot be planned for in advance, but the solutions to which will come about organically over the course of regular meetings and frequent discussion among members and other stakeholders.

⁹ <http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/opinion/blogs/beltway-confidential/Michelle-373-million-in-stimulus-money-for-better-vending-machine-food-64192422.html>, 14 October 2009

¹⁰ Personal interview with Becky Elias, January 28, 2010

¹¹ Ibid.

Intentions

The guiding question for this paper has been as follows: How can Los Angeles, as such a large and complex region, effectively involve its food system's stakeholders to come together to create a useful and more sustainable food system? I went about answering this question by talking to professionals in food policy-related fields in both Los Angeles and Connecticut, and by participating in the LAFPTF process as a researcher and assistant, of sorts. The client for this paper can thus be considered to be the LAFPTF, as I worked directly with various members and its staff to prepare for the stakeholder listening sessions and attended nearly all its meetings, taking their official minutes.

This paper seeks to examine the construction, processes, and outcomes of the FPC attempts in Los Angeles in the 1990s, and of Hartford, CT, two very different examples of food policy creation and stakeholder involvement. I will try to illuminate concrete facts and designs of each example that render it unique, successful, and/or problematic. Next, I will discuss the current process underway in Los Angeles of the Food Policy Task Force (LAFPTF), which I have witnessed first hand over the last six months. Based on the examples of the two FPCs and the course thus far of the yet-impressionable undertaking in Los Angeles, along with personal interviews with the Executive Director of the Hartford Food System, the staff person of the New Haven Food Policy Council, and two of the members of the Los Angeles Food Policy Task Force (both of whom were also members of the LA Food Security and Hunger Partnership in the 1990s), I will attempt to show the

importance of bringing everyone involved to the table as Los Angeles tries again to facilitate the creation of a better and healthier food system. Because food policy creation varies from place to place, it is difficult to generalize about what works and what does not, but I will attempt to highlight those lessons that can probably be extrapolated from Hartford to Los Angeles, and here, from one decade to another. Finally, I will offer recommendations to the fledgling effort in Los Angeles, as it begins to take on a new form this summer. These suggestions will be distilled from the findings of the primary and secondary research, completed through personal interviews, participation in many LAFPTF stakeholder listening sessions and full meetings, and a review of related literature and information. Ideally, these pieces of advice will be constructive to the LAFPTF as it moves forward.

Methodology: Interviews and Participation

To gain a better understanding of what had happened with the Los Angeles Food Security and Hunger Partnership, I chose to speak with Robert Gottlieb, currently Director of Occidental College's Urban and Environmental Policy Institute. Professor Gottlieb was one of those overseeing the 1992-1993 *Seeds of Change* study, as well as a member of both the Volunteer Advisory Council on Hunger and the Los Angeles Food Security and Hunger Partnership in the 1990s. He is currently a co-chair of the LAFPTF. He has taught a variety of food-related courses at both the graduate and undergraduate levels, and has a forthcoming book with Anupama Joshi, entitled Food Justice: Transforming the Food System (2010). Professor Gottlieb spoke with me about his ideas for the future of the LAFPTF and its next

embodiment, the shortcomings of the 1990s process, as well as other related topics. Professor Gottlieb has a wealth of information, both past and present, and at a more personal level, has functioned as an advisor for me throughout the comps process.

Similarly, I spoke with Frank Tamborello, another member of the latter two of the above bodies. Having worked with him at Hunger Action LA, I had some background with him and his organization, and an idea of his viewpoint on the issues being addressed by the LAFPTF. Frank is in the somewhat unique position of representing more of a community and personal perspective on the LAFPTF, as opposed to the more organizational or structured perspective by most of its other members. He had stated from the beginning of the process (specifically to his constituents) that he agreed to participate in the LAFPTF with an inside-outside approach, and that he would be informing HALA's members throughout of the proceedings of the Task Force, and attempt to do the opposite as well. I asked both Frank and Professor Gottlieb similar questions about proceedings in Los Angeles, with only a few modifications based on individual station.

To gain more of an understanding of the work being done in Connecticut, I spoke with Martha Page, the newly instated Executive Director of the Hartford Food System. Ms. Page answered more general questions about the workings of both the Food System and the Advisory Commission on Food, as well as a couple more specific questions about ways the two bodies measure success, and how they reach out to involve more of their stakeholders. To further inform my recommendations, I also spoke with Becky Elias, who is the New Haven FPC's staff person. I worked briefly with Becky in the summer of 2009 at the Yale Law School through their

Community Economic Development Clinic, and knew her to be a valuable source of information.

These interviews all followed a similar course of relatively informed questions, followed by detailed and thoughtful answers and discussion. The field of food policy is broad, confusing, and yet developing, and it involves a great many issues, interests, and groups that must be thoroughly understood by those attempting to create it. It was important to speak with these types of people, who all successfully explained to me, a newcomer, what they do every day to further connect and deepen the existing work being done in the field. Through talking to people who have already engaged in the process of building these Councils and Commissions, and are versed in methods for their upkeep, one can learn the lessons of what has worked and what has not, and from those FPCs created elsewhere, connections can be made about what can be brought to bear in Los Angeles. Also, the age-old teaching that those who are ignorant of history are doomed to repeat it, applies in this case, too: what went wrong with the Los Angeles Food Security and Hunger Partnership is an important lesson for the current Task Force to consider as well.

These more formal interviews provided an excellent backbone to the personal connection piece of this topic, and served to inform my investigation into the history of the two Connecticut and one Los Angeles FPCs. Equally as important was my role in the proceedings of the Task Force; I took the minutes of its meetings, helped to facilitate the listening sessions, and assisted Alexa and the rest of the research team with general administrative tasks. This experience was invaluable, as

it allowed me to take some responsibility for the actual workings of the process and to see the gaps in representation, prompting opportunities for solution.

A Brief Introduction to Hartford, CT

The FPC developed in Hartford as one of the first in a handful around the country. Mark Winne established the Hartford Food System in 1978, which is a “private, non-profit organization working to create an equitable and sustainable food system that addresses the underlying causes of hunger and poor nutrition facing lower-income and elderly Connecticut residents.”²³ This organization works to staff the City of Hartford Advisory Commission on Food (its FPC), which is housed in City government. The Commission was instated by the City Council in 1991, “to address issues of hunger and food security in Hartford, particularly among its low-income residents.”²⁴ The Commission primarily works to link those organizations working on food issues with City and Federal level programs meant to serve residents of the area. The Commission is able to recommend new and improved

²³ Buy CT Grown, <http://www.buyctgrown.com/hartfordfoodsystem>

²⁴ <http://www.hartford.gov/government/FoodCommission/Commission.htm>

food-related policies and programs to the city government,²⁵ though it does not have the power to legislate on its own.

The stakeholders serving on the Hartford Food Commission are from an interesting selection of backgrounds- hunger, emergency food system, health and human services, nutrition information, healthcare, Hispanic health services, community gardening, city government, and the Hartford Food System. This paper will later examine what groups might be missing from this list, and the impacts that might have on this particular commission and the areas it serves, as well as the general consequences of the lack of well-rounded representation on FPCs and in the food system of any area. Hartford has long been considered a successful example of a FPC, and Mark Winne remains one of the foremost experts on the creation of FPCs and food policy in general; there is much to be learned from what has transpired in Hartford.

Background: LA In the 1990s

Following the 1992 Rodney King riots in Los Angeles, hunger and poverty advocates, along with some urban planners and community organizers, began to realize that the prevalence of hunger and lack of convenient access to healthy food in low-income communities were major factors contributing to the formidable anger and feelings of unjust treatment by their residents. In an effort to investigate the level of disparity in affected neighborhoods in Los Angeles, Robert Gottlieb, formerly of UCLA's Urban Planning Department, oversaw the 1992-1993 *Seeds of*

²⁵ Ibid.

Change study done by six graduate students, which examined Los Angeles' South Central district, one of the city's poorest and most crime-ridden areas.²⁶ The study found an absence of grocery stores in the inner city, inadequate public transportation that would allow residents without cars to shop elsewhere, a significant percentage of hungry residents in the area, and a lack of official food policy in both the City and County of Los Angeles.²⁷ Based on their findings, the authors of the study made recommendations for how the city should move forward to begin to correct the existing imbalances.

As a result of *Seeds of Change*, between 1993-1994, the City of Los Angeles formed the Volunteer Advisory Council on Hunger (VACH), composed of hunger advocates and professionals from other related organizations. The committee was established to "develop strategies toward eradicating hunger...,"²⁸ and to begin the process of making the public and the city's leadership aware of the disparities within the city. The VACH, true to its name, focused their work primarily on hunger, though they did take into account the adjacent problems of food security and food justice, and while they worked mostly in a local context, they also thought in a broader sense:

Saltzman stated that the City of Los Angeles needs help from the region to combat hunger and that a City policy would not operate in a vacuum... Gottlieb suggested that anti-hunger activists focus on the municipal and regional levels because probable gridlock at the federal level will be problematic. Hunger is a regional problem and the City of Los Angeles is only one dimension of the Regional policy.²⁹

²⁶ LA Times, Sonia Nazario June 11 1993

²⁷ <http://www.sarep.ucdavis.edu/NEWSLTR/v6n3/sa-9.htm>

²⁸ Newsletter of the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority. No. 57/ June 24, 1996

²⁹ VACH Minutes from meeting on December 15, 1994

This dichotomy between city and region continues to be difficult through the present day, as advocates and professionals try to determine their most effective point of intervention.

The VACH continued their work through 1995 and into the first half of 1996, garnering attention from Mayor Riordan and the *Los Angeles Times*. From the beginning, one of the body's main goals was to instate a FPC for the City of Los Angeles, as per the findings of the *Seeds of Change* study. The VACH performed much of the necessary legwork to make way for a FPC, by connecting those working in various related fields to one another, and creating a space for itself on the Mayor's radar. One of the most important steps taken by the VACH was its Public Hearings, meant to encourage a public discourse on the issues with which it dealt, and to gauge interest and understanding of these and other issues. These hearings were "structured as forums for discussion of hunger-related topical issues,"³⁰ and were open to the public, which was formed mainly by the constituents of the various groups who had representation on the VACH. Each of the six hearings followed its own theme, all elements of food policy. Andy Fisher,³¹ who had been one of the UCLA students to work on the *Seeds of Change* study, worked as a consultant on the development and execution of the hearings.

The major outcome of the hearings was the formation of the Los Angeles Food Security and Hunger Partnership, an extension of the VACH, as some of its members continued on to be part of this second body. This FPC was granted both

³⁰ VACH Minutes from meeting on January 31, 1995

³¹ Mr. Fisher has since gone on to become the director of Community Food Security Coalition. Knowledge gained from author's personal interview with Robert Gottlieb, February 24, 2010.

money and a staff person, two facets very hard to come by in the world of food policy making. However, the LAFSHP lasted only from 1996-1999, for reasons that will be discussed later in the paper. Following this collapse, the Los Angeles food policy landscape was quiet for a time, a hiatus interrupted in 2001 by the Taste of Justice conference. UEPI co-hosted this gathering along with the Los Angeles Coalition to End Hunger and Homelessness, the attendees of which were mostly advocates and professionals who were tired of waiting.³² The conference set the food systems dialogue back into motion.

A Bit About the Current Situation in Los Angeles

The population of the state of Connecticut is estimated at 3,518,288.³³ New Haven is a county of approximately 846,000³⁴, and Hartford County's population is slightly higher than 877,000.³⁵ While both of these counties have their work cut out for them, Los Angeles County's population is nearly 10,000,000.³⁶ This is more than 3 times the population of the entire state of Connecticut, thus creating a huge and arduous task of organization and coordination for those in charge of the food system in Los Angeles. Los Angeles County's total land area is estimated at 4,084 square miles,³⁷ while Connecticut's is 4,872 square miles.³⁸ These data show that Los

³² A Taste of Justice: Conference Discussions and Opportunities for Future Action- A Report on the November 3, 2001 A Taste of Justice Conference.

³³ As of 2009 (US Census, Population Finder- <http://factfinder.census.gov>)

³⁴ Ibid, as of July 2008.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ <http://www.usacitiesonline.com/calosangelescounty.htm>

³⁸ <http://www.city-data.com/states/Connecticut-Location-size-and-extent.html>

Angeles County is, area-wise, the size of a small state, and population-wise, a much larger one. As of 2008, Los Angeles County's poverty rate was 15.1%, the 20th highest in California (out of a total of 55 counties).³⁹ According to the Food Research and Action Center, as a state, California ranked 22nd for prevalence of food insecurity,⁴⁰ with the percentage of households in the state that are food insecure at 10.2.⁴¹ These data can be extrapolated to some extent to describe Los Angeles County, as it falls above the halfway mark in the state's poverty list.

There are a myriad of organizations at all levels and from many disciplines working on various food-related issues, and more spring up all the time. In the recent years, coalitions have been built and enforced, and many of these groups have come together more than before to consolidate their related efforts. Over the past decade, since Los Angeles' first try at creating a FPC, these groups have continued their work.

In the summer of 2009, Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa and Deputy Mayor Larry Frank decided to celebrate the 30-year anniversary of farmers' markets in the city, and consulted with Paula Daniels of the Board of Public Works, UEPI, and the LA Conservation Corps about how best to mark the occasion. Capitalizing on this opportunity, these organizations agreed to provide their expertise, in exchange for the Mayor's commitment to address food issues in Los Angeles on a larger scale. Mayor Villaraigosa agreed, and officially announced the Food Policy Task Force on September 3rd, 2009. The Mayor worked with the same

³⁹ Food Research and Action Center, California Poverty Stats for 2008.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

aforementioned groups to determine the members for the task force, and the group had its first meeting in November of the same year. This task force was instated to be a yearlong process, to meet about once a month, and to develop recommendations in the areas of:

Best practices in the field of food policy council development; Food retail and marketing issues; Food access and transportation; Urban agriculture and community gardens; Enhance urban and rural community relationships and understanding; Emergency food networks; Sustainable agriculture, water use and pesticide use; School feeding and nutrition education programs; Food waste; Local and regional food initiatives.⁴²

This was a difficult task, given the breadth of issues and subsequent number of affected groups, but the consulted professionals put together a group of capable stakeholders from various areas to begin the work set out for them by the mayor. From its inception, it has been a very different process than that of the first try at a food policy council in the 1990s.

Concurrently, the Urban Rural Roundtable process began, managed by Roots of Change.⁴³ These roundtable meetings brought farmers from the central part of California together with hunger advocates and purchasers (among others) from Los Angeles and its surrounding counties. The purpose of the URRTs was to physically connect the various groups of stakeholders of the food system, allowing for conversation and brainstorming about how best to facilitate the linkage of one step

⁴² http://laist.com/2009/09/03/more_details_on_villaraigosas_food.php

⁴³ "Roots of Change (ROC) is a collaboration of community, nonprofit, philanthropic, government, and business organizations. ROC provides resources to a diverse alliance of leaders and their institutions that are unified by strategy and collaborate in pursuit of a sustainable food system in California by 2030."
(<http://www.rocfund.org/who-we-are/>)

to the next, working within the goals of sustainability and “Good Food.”⁴⁴ Roots of Change used its previous experience in the facilitation of URRTs in San Francisco to plan the process for Los Angeles, working with the leaders of the LAFPTF to try to make it as effective as possible.⁴⁵ The group for Los Angeles, which met four times from January-March, 2010, was made up of “more than 50 people from as far as Monterey, San Luis Obispo and Kern Counties to the north, San Diego County to the south, and Riverside and San Bernardino Counties to the east.”⁴⁶ The URRT presented its report and recommendations to LA Deputy Mayor Larry Frank, along with many of the LAFPTF members and the California Secretary of Agriculture, A.G. Kawamura on March 25th, 2010. The whole URRT process was meant to supplement the work of the LAFPTF, and to add in more of the farmer/rural perspective, which it accomplished. It was, however, somewhat repetitive; many of the same people participated in both the URRT and the LAFPTF, and while the added dialogue was likely beneficial, the process of creating a report and recommendations, and presenting it to the City of Los Angeles could potentially serve to confuse some of those who may end up being the people to implement the suggestions. On the other hand, the two reports could also serve one another by reinforcing the idea of the

⁴⁴ “The term “good food” used throughout this report refers to food that is:

- ✓ **Healthy**
- ✓ **Affordable** and accessible to people of all socioeconomic levels
- ✓ **Green** – Produced, processed, distributed and recycled locally in environmentally sustainable ways
- ✓ **Fair** – All participants in the food supply chain receive fair compensation and fair treatment

A healthy, equitable and sustainable **regional food system** is a system of growers, processors, distributors, retailers, and cooks that produces and delivers good food to the residents of that region.” (LAURRT Recommendations Draft 3/17/10)

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

recommendations, and the two presentations and reports will strengthen one another, hammering home the necessity of applying the recommendations- only time will tell.

Hartford, CT: A Case Study

Background

Hartford is a city that is geographically quite unlike Los Angeles: it is in the Northeast, a very different climatic and agriculture environment. Many of the crops grown in Connecticut are different from those grown in California, and the farms there tend to be smaller and remain family-owned.⁴⁷ According to a report on the Hartford Food System (HFS), “about 85% of Connecticut’s food supply is imported from other states or countries,” and “the average meal eaten in Connecticut travels one thousand three hundred miles from farm to plate.”⁴⁸ Also according to the report, Connecticut lost 73% of its farmland between 1940 and 1973.⁴⁹ Finally, as of 1999, “the average age of farmers in Connecticut is 56.”⁵⁰ Along with planning policies that consistently push farmland and its inhabitants toward elimination, all of the above statistics point to the destruction of available growing lands and the rapid disappearance of production of and access to local food in the state of Connecticut.

⁴⁷ The Hartford Food System- A Guide to Developing Community Food Programs, Replication Manual. 1999.

⁴⁸ Ibid. 7-8

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

The unemployment rate in Hartford County in January of 2010 was 10.0%,⁵¹ and, according to the HFS report, “Since 1968, the number of supermarkets in Hartford has dwindled from thirteen to two” (as of 2008, there is only one),⁵² and as of 1999, “thirty-nine percent of households in Hartford do not own a vehicle- as compared to five percent in the surrounding towns... Hartford’s public bus system does not offer direct routes from neighborhoods lacking supermarkets to the two remaining stores.”⁵³ Thus, many of the city’s residents are out of work, and depend on a public transit system that is inadequate. Over the last three decades, the HFS has addressed these problems many ways, through policies and programs, advocacy and networking; First, a bit about the HFS’s structure and resources.

The Hartford Food System, Inc. was formed as a result of a study done by the Public Resource Center in Washington D.C in 1977 about the growing disparities in Hartford’s food system.⁵⁴ The HFS was originally a “hub of neighborhood-based programs, farmers’ markets, community gardens, food buying clubs, and solar greenhouses”, but has since come to be “an incubator for community-based food programs. HFS will initiate a program with a number of collaborators, operate the program until it works smoothly, and then select a lead...from one of the collaborating groups to carry on the project.”⁵⁵ This way, the HFS can work with the group or organization to find resources and funding for its project, foster it through the difficult beginning stages with the help and time of its staff, and then once the

⁵¹ United States Bureau of Labor Statistics.
<http://www.bls.gov/web/metro/laumtrk.htm>

⁵² Hartford Food System Fact Sheet, 2008.

⁵³ Hartford Food System Replication Manual.

⁵⁴ Ibid. 3

⁵⁵ Ibid. 3

project is able to run on its own, the HFS can reallocate its time and resources to other areas.

The HFS staff includes its Executive Director, who mostly deals with fundraising and management, along with six or seven other professionals to do “key program research and development.”⁵⁶ The HFS generally rounds out its workforce with interns and volunteers, who do all manners of tasks, including farm work.⁵⁷ The HFS, which is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, is funded “45% by foundations and corporate donors, 9% by government grants, 7% by individual donors, and 2% by religious congregations. Program generated income, principally from produce sales and share memberships at Holcomb Farm CSA, accounts for 34% of annual revenue.”⁵⁸

History of Approaches and Projects

Due to the inflation of the late 1970s and into the 1980s, the HFS began to open “farmers’ markets, community gardens, food buying clubs, community greenhouses, and a community cannery”, all of which were meant to lower the cost of food for Hartford city residents.⁵⁹ The farmers’ markets and community gardens have remained successful and grown over the years, while the greenhouses (in their initial incarnation) and food-buying clubs did not, and the HFS moved on to a different approach for food purchasing improvement:

⁵⁶ Ibid. 5

⁵⁷ Ibid. 5

⁵⁸ Hartford Food System Fact Sheet.

⁵⁹ See 56.

...It began to advocate more aggressively to both the supermarket industry as well as the city and state economic development departments to retain and improve supermarkets. This more conventional strategy acknowledged the power of market forces that could not be overcome by well-intentioned but often under-financed alternative efforts.... The results have been as follows: the first chain supermarket in Hartford in twenty years opened in 1994, and two new independent supermarkets opened in Hartford in the next three years...Public transportation to supermarkets has improved, and due to price information and opposition to a supermarket merge, most Hartford shoppers are paying prices comparable to those paid by more affluent suburban shoppers.⁶⁰

This example shows the ability and willingness of the HFS to adapt to shifts in demand and circumstance; they let go of an endeavor that had not shown itself to be profitable, and shifted instead to tactics that they had found would best address the given circumstances. The farmers' markets proved to be such a success that HFS opened the Connecticut Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, "a jointly funded state and federal program that started with twenty thousand dollars in 1986 and expanded to over five hundred thousand dollars today (1999)."⁶¹ This program was later expanded to include a Pantry Coupon element: HFS partners with Foodshare (explained later) to allocate funds to the program, and apportions \$10-20,000 in coupons to thirty food pantries, which in turn give the coupons to approximately 1,000 of their patrons.⁶² This program serves both needy families, as well as local farmers.⁶³ HFS also opened a "downtown public market that added a business development component to the farmers' market...(it) gave twenty start-up food businesses a chance to become viable by selling at a highly visible location and a

⁶⁰ Ibid. 12

⁶¹ Ibid. 13

⁶² See 56

⁶³ Ibid. 19

very low cost” - This market is no longer in its original location, but continues to operate in a slightly different form.⁶⁴

The next issue area the HFS focused on (as a result of its increasing popularity around the country) was that of organic foods. The HFS brought affordable organic produce to inner city residents through the construction of farm stands in low-income areas, as well as through bolstering membership in CSAs. Also, “in 1993... Granby (a thirty-minute drive from Hartford) gave HFS a chance to start a community supported agriculture farm, (Holcomb Farm) on sixteen acres of a three hundred-acre farm it owned.”⁶⁵ “Holcomb Farm CSA distributed more than 33,000 pounds of fruits and vegetables in 2006 to low-income individuals, with the rest of the harvest sold at market rate to offset the cost of the project.”⁶⁶ HFS also started Grow Hartford in 2004:

(They) converted a blighted, overgrown lot in central Hartford into an urban mini-farm that grows fresh produce for the surrounding neighborhoods through organic methods. The site also serves as an outdoor classroom to educate members of the community about food and nutrition issues. Groups of all ages visit Grow Hartford to gain a better understanding of where healthy food comes from, while volunteers and a crew of summer youth harvest thousands of pounds of fruits and vegetables.⁶⁷

Thus, through its activities, HFS has brought a significant amount of fresh, organic, local produce to residents who would have otherwise had no access to it.

In a related effort, the HFS began Project Farm Fresh Start, a Hartford schools-focused procurement revision plan (increased the schools’ use of local produce by nearly 1000 pounds per year), combined with a curriculum of farm and food

⁶⁴ Ibid. 13

⁶⁵ Ibid. 13-14

⁶⁶ Hartford Food System Fact Sheet

⁶⁷ Ibid.

education.⁶⁸ Next, and in response to the funding cuts to federal programs like WIC, HFS “led efforts by as many as thirty churches and social service organizations to establish Foodshare, the first food bank warehouse in north central Connecticut. Today Foodshare...distributes millions of pounds of donated food annually to 175 food pantries, soup kitchens, and shelters in the greater Hartford area.”⁶⁹ More recently, HFS began the Healthy Food Retailer Initiative, described as follows:

The Hartford Food System coordinates a coalition of corner markets and inner city grocery stores...to increase the availability of healthy food. Since Hartford has only one full-size supermarket, small neighborhood retailers are a crucial grocery source for many residents. Thirty-one stores have joined the Healthy Food Retailer Initiative thus far, committing themselves to stock healthier items and replace 5% of their junk food inventories with regular groceries.⁷⁰

Clearly, HFS has approached the task of improving Hartford’s food system from many different angles, intervening not only at the level of the emergency food structure, but at preceding points as well. The HFS has worked diligently from its inception to research where needs lie and to develop plans of action to address these issues specifically and precisely.

Having worked and formed connections with many different organizations through the years of its existence, the HFS has been instrumental in setting up a number of groups, such as the Hartford Food Policy Commission, the Connecticut Food Policy Council, and the Community Food Security Coalition (CFSC), which is a nationwide organization with “a diverse membership with almost 300 organizations from social and economic justice, anti-hunger, environmental, community

⁶⁸ See 56

⁶⁹ Ibid. 14

⁷⁰ Hartford Food System Fact Sheet

development, sustainable agriculture, community gardening and other fields.”⁷¹

Mark Winne, the first Executive Director of the HFS, has since gone on to help build FPCs elsewhere in the country- currently in New Mexico, and serves as Food Policy Council Program Director for the CFSC.⁷² The CFSC does valuable work throughout the country, advocating for policy, and connecting local food systems to one another, fostering communication and spreading knowledge.

The Hartford Advisory Commission on Food Policy

In 1990, a report entitled Community Childhood Hunger Identification Project (CCHIP) was released, telling of alarming levels of childhood hunger in Hartford. This prompted the formation of a hunger-related task force, which in turn called for the adoption of a municipal food policy, along with a FPC, which the City Council approved in 1991, and the FPC began meeting in 1992.⁷³ The FPC was initially comprised of fifteen members, all volunteers, who had been appointed by the City Council and the mayor. The role of HFS in the Commission is described as follows:

The HFS has played a considerable role in developing, instituting, and operating the Commission. HFS assisted with the CCHIP study’s policy recommendations, and Mark Winne...has been an active Commissioner for the duration, serving a term as Commission chair. (He) spends a considerable amount of his time guiding the Commission. HFS also hires and supervises the Commission’s staff intern...⁷⁴

Thus, the HFS is largely responsible for overseeing the Hartford Commission, which allows for a sort of joint authority from the Hartford City Council and the HFS. This

⁷¹ Community Food Security Coalition, www.foodsecurity.org/aboutcfsc.html

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ The Hartford Food System- A Guide to Developing Community Food Programs, Replication Manual

⁷⁴ Ibid. 31-32

seems to keep the work of the Commission from getting too bogged down in either governmental or HFS affairs, and allows it to benefit from the guidance of both- a sort of check and balance system.

While the Hartford Food Policy Commission cannot actually create policy itself, it advises “the City Council, the Mayor, and City Departments on issues of food and hunger. It may recommend city government actions, or even advocate for issues in state government, but it does not have statutory authority to direct city action. Its approval is not required for city resolutions that affect food issues in Hartford.”⁷⁵ This balance seems to work for both the Commission and the HFS. The organizations work both together and apart to manage and facilitate programs and projects in the city and surrounding areas, many of which are continuations of those mentioned earlier. Another has to do with the Summer Food Service Program, which is a federally funded summer meal provision program for children and teens: a 1993 survey done by the Commission showed that there was not enough fresh and healthy food being served in the program. “The Commission worked with the SFSP administrators in the Hartford Parks and Recreation Department to contract with a local vendor, securing both local jobs and fresher, higher-quality meals.”⁷⁶ One other notable program run by the Commission is the Community Food Security Awards it gives out to “draw attention to creative solutions to food challenges in Hartford and to observe World Food Day.”⁷⁷ The Commission gives these three awards, one to a chosen member of a non-profit organization, an individual (or group) from the

⁷⁵ Ibid. 32

⁷⁶ Ibid. 33

⁷⁷ Ibid. 33

private sector, and one from government. The recipients are awarded with a “dinner reception and plaques,” donated in part by the Children’s Medical Center.⁷⁸

Programs like this one help to gain public awareness for food issues, especially as a greater and broader food movement develops around the country.

Final Thoughts on Hartford

Hartford’s system of food policy advocacy and organization is one of the country’s most successful, and most enduring. It has been in existence and evolving for the last thirty-two years, changing its focus when different needs arise. The HFS and the Commission evaluate their progress in many different ways, but do not have one specific metric, according to the HFS Executive Director, Martha Page. They evaluate their farmers’ markets based on their respective revenues, “Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program coupon sales, food stamp sales, and price comparisons between farmers’ markets and grocery stores. HFS’s pantry coupons have had a 60% redemption rate over the duration of the program. In 1997, the redemption rate peaked at 70%.”⁷⁹ These are useful measures, as each addresses a specific program managed by the HFS and the Commission, and by understanding how many people are utilizing each one, they can shift their funds and programming accordingly. Thus far, FPCs have found it relatively impossible to develop a single, overarching metric to evaluate progress, as each component of their work is quite different. It is possible that after FPCs have become more prevalent and have been in existence for a longer amount of time, professionals will determine how best to

⁷⁸ Ibid. 33

⁷⁹ Ibid. 47

evaluate them in a more thorough way. It is also possible that this will never happen, but that the different specific indicators looked at by each council will be narrowed down further, and distilled into a set of criteria used by more councils around the country. This whole process is dynamic, and varies significantly from council to council, area to area.

Los Angeles: A Case Study in Development

Little is publicly known about Los Angeles's first attempt at a FPC. The VACH convened its hearings and decided to aim their work in the direction of furthering food security and eradicate hunger. They formed the Los Angeles Food Security and Hunger Partnership as a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation, housed outside of government, in addition to the formation of city advisory body located in the Office of the Mayor."⁸⁰ On December 6, 1995, the Los Angeles "City Council adopted a VACH recommendation that it shall be the policy of the City of Los Angeles to help combat and eliminate hunger and establish food security (Council File No. 95-2240)."⁸¹ The adoption of this as a City policy also included the incorporation of the LAFSHP: "Its mission is to promote food security and combat hunger through empowerment and community and economic development strategies, and to assure that all residents have access to a continuous source of safe, affordable, culturally acceptable, and nutritious food."⁸² For reference, and this will be discussed further

⁸⁰ The Los Angeles Food Security and Hunger Partnership and Food Security and Hunger Policy Proposal, written by the VACH, October 1995.

⁸¹ Memo from the VACH and Community Development Department to Mayor Richard Riordan, January 1996. 2

⁸² Ibid. 2

later, see sidebar in Appendix D on the Good Food For All Agenda from the current Los Angeles Food Policy Task Force. The LAFSHP would “consist of 18 members, with 6 each being appointed by the Mayor, President of the City Council and the General Manager of the Community Development Department (CDD).”⁸³

The purpose of creating a nonprofit corporation adjunct to the Partnership was to “provide funding to the Partnership for staffing and the carrying out of its mission,” and it would make those elected to the Partnership the corporation’s Board of Directors. Following are the proposals made on behalf of the LAFSHP for what it would plan to accomplish:

Prepare an annual report on hunger; Develop a set of food security and hunger indicators, based in part on existing models; Review and evaluate existing City policies on food and hunger and recommend new policies, as warranted; Collect and monitor data on a continuing basis on the nutritional, affordability, accessibility, and quality of food; Collaborate with community groups on local food-related issues and initiatives; Develop pilot projects based on empowerment and community economic development principles in targeted areas.⁸⁴

It was intended that the CDD would continue to assist the LAFSHP as it began its work, and they recommended that the Mayor and City Council allocate \$280,000 to the LAFSHP over four years as “seed money”, in smaller and smaller amounts over the course of the period.

Taking Control

According to the VACH’s proposal for the LAFSHP, “The chair will be elected by the partners annually.”⁸⁵ This chairperson would be chosen from within the partners, and would function as the head of the Partnership. According to Frank

⁸³ Ibid. 2

⁸⁴ Ibid. 3

⁸⁵ See 92

Tamborello, it was assumed among a majority of the partners that Bob Erlenbusch, then the head of the Los Angeles Coalition to End Hunger and Homelessness, would be elected chair. However, when it came time to have the actual election, Steve Saltzman (a former politician who had lost in his bid to win the City Council's 5th District race against Zev Yaroslavsky and had ended up on the VACH and subsequently, on the Partnership), announced that in addition to the few votes he had in the room, had just enough "proxy votes" to beat Erlenbusch. His so-called majority ruled, sending the group into "third grade level- arguments"⁸⁶ and permanently derailing the process. What had started out as a productive and relatively organic undertaking, from the *Seeds of Change* study to the VACH, "got hijacked"⁸⁷ as a result of this behind-the-scenes move pulled by Saltzman. Prof. Gottlieb believes that while Saltzman had another agenda apart from that of the LAFSHP, the rest of the Partnership could have worked to "alleviate and redirect" the negative outcomes of Saltzman's power play, but their efforts were "too little and too few."⁸⁸ The group not in favor of Saltzman had begun to convene prior to the Partnership's official meeting time to try to set up their own priorities and plan actions to take outside of those that the LAFSHP would take as a whole, as Saltzman's priorities veered farther away from theirs. It is unclear quite why the Partnership kept Saltzman in power as the proposal stipulates that the chair will be elected annually. In any case, he remained.

⁸⁶ Personal Interview with Frank Tamborello, March 5, 2010.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Personal Interview with Robert Gottlieb, February 24, 2010.

Also detracting from the effectiveness of the Partnership was the fact that Robert Farrell, previously a member of the VACH and a retired LA City Council Member (1974-1991 in the 8th District), was chosen to be the one paid staff member for the LAFSHP. He had apparently decided that he preferred to be retired, and did not do much in the way of keeping meetings on track, or resolving the leadership disputes. Additionally, according to Frank Tamborello, the partners were mostly “executive director-level people, and usually only half were present.”⁸⁹ This exacerbated the fact that the partners that had remained interested had already lost confidence in the body and its leadership. According to Prof. Gottlieb, the Partnership suffered from “a lack of a strong and connected food movement,”⁹⁰ which would have given it a deeper purpose and more public backing and interest. It might also have provided some measure of accountability that could have helped to oust Mr. Saltzman from his position. However, the idea of a food movement was still negligible at that point, and after continuing in this vein until 1999, the LAFSHP finally imploded, not even collecting its last year’s worth of funding from the CDD. According to Prof. Gottlieb, there were no “clearly defined outcomes” from the Partnership, in terms of policy, programs, or projects. Also, the LAFSHP hardly spent any of the money it was allocated. As Prof. Gottlieb put it, “there never was an effective budget (it was housed in the Community Development Department and they never really created a functioning structure either.”⁹¹ It is sad to note that most of the \$240,000 received by the LAFSHP was never put to use.

⁸⁹ See 87.

⁹⁰ See 100.

⁹¹ Personal communication with Prof. Gottlieb, April 9, 2010.

Presumably the LAFSHP did not detract from work already being done, but it seems unlikely that in its divided state it was able to provide much assistance, either. Clearly, this was an extremely unfortunate waste of time and resources; Prof. Gottlieb describes both the VACH and the Partnership as a “detour” along the way of building the food movement in Los Angeles.

Moving Forward, Slowly

What happened next can mostly be described as a short period of hibernation, followed by a slow climb back to the same rung of the ladder. In 2001, UEPI’s Center for Food and Justice co-sponsored the Taste of Justice Conference with the LA Coalition to End Hunger and Homelessness. This conference took into account what had gone wrong with the LAFSHP and organized itself into four working groups to discuss what needed to be done next. These four were: Food Policy, Community Gardens, Farmers’ Markets and Supermarkets, and School Food.⁹² The Conference got advocates, community members, and professionals thinking again about what had to change, and how best to do it. Following it, the Farm to School program gained momentum, and other various projects took shape around Los Angeles and across the United States. The work being done coincided with worsening health statistics, and together, they created the perfect storm for work to begin again in earnest.

⁹² A Taste of Justice: Conference Discussions and Opportunities for Future Action- A Report on the November 3, 2001 A Taste of Justice Conference.

The Task Force is Born

The succession of meetings between the Deputy Mayor, UEPI, Paula Daniels, the LA Conservation Corps, and a handful of existing food-related groups to plan the 30-year anniversary event for farmers' markets led to discussion of creating better food policy in the city, and it was determined that the groups would help the Mayor's office with planning the event as long as the Mayor agreed to commit to bettering Los Angeles' food system. The participants agreed on the Task Force format, and Mayor Villaraigosa officially announced the body's inception at the 30-year anniversary event on September 3rd, 2009. From there, the Deputy Mayor met with Paula Daniels, UEPI, and LA Conservation Corps to determine the Task Force's membership and coordinator. For the latter, they chose Alexa Delwiche (See next paragraph). To determine the membership of the Task Force, they tried to identify people from many different places in the food system, including anti-hunger, community gardening, racial justice, grocery store accountability, academia, food issues advocacy, conservation groups, city government, public health, etc.⁹³ (These particular individuals were chosen also because of their relationships with those doing the choosing, showing the importance of good networking). The goal of uniting these professionals from different spots along the food chain, some of whom had never met, was to begin again the conversation about coordination, and to try to identify what food-related issues they could all agree needed to be addressed. The need was apparent to all involved, as they saw gaps in the scope of their personal work, or a lack of potential allies, or a dearth of funding from government for

⁹³ See Appendix B for a complete list of LAFPTF members

projects, or one of many other potential problems. All of the participants also saw the pressing public health concerns, as mentioned earlier in the paper. In any case, they agreed to work with the group to try to create a more synchronized food system for Los Angeles.

The duties of the LAFPTF coordinator were determined to be: write the final report of the Task Force, contact and coordinate stakeholders around the County, and plan for and run the FPTF meetings, among other assorted tasks. Alexa had earlier been a public policy student at UCLA, and thus entered this process with connections through the University and in related fields, including labor. The rest of the Task Force's research team was comprised of myself and two current Urban Planning Masters' students from UCLA, Clare Fox and Cedar Landsman, who each focused on areas of food policy development requiring exploration for their potential application to Los Angeles- best practices from other FPCs around North America, and developing for the LAFPTF's official report the stakeholder landscape around LA, respectively. The research team began their work in October of 2009, beginning to make contact with the LAFPTF members in an attempt to start to involve their constituents and contacts outside of the Task Force. The idea of this process was presented as follows in the LAFPTF's Organizational Document: "In addition to engaging Task Force and working group members, the Coordinator and research team will conduct interviews of stakeholders across the LA City and County food system in order to perform a robust evaluation."⁹⁴ Alexa met with as

⁹⁴ LA Food Policy Organizational Document. 16 November 2009.

many stakeholders from the area as possible, beginning to assess potential areas of overlap and points of intervention on which the Task Force could focus.

The LAFPTF met once a month as a whole group from November through May, and also formed working groups in addition to the full group, which served to bring together members with interest and experience in the specific areas of supply, demand, and structure (of a future body). After the Task Force's first full meeting, it was decided by the chair, co-chairs, and coordinator⁹⁵ that a facilitator should be hired to help run the full group meetings.⁹⁶ The Task Force working groups met both during full-group gatherings, as well as at other times, and worked together to draft their initial recommendations in each of those three areas. Alexa then gathered their suggestions into a document that the whole Task Force would eventually review and discuss. This review process took place first on March 12th, 2010, and followed a very visual format. The Task Force facilitator had written all of the proposed recommendations on butcher paper and had posted them around the meeting room. She provided each of the Task Force members with red, yellow, and green stickers (strong concern and need for discussion, slight concern, and go-ahead, respectively), and then took 20 minutes of the meeting for the members to walk around the room, read the recommendations, and place stickers on them according to their feelings about each one.⁹⁷

⁹⁵ Robert Gottlieb, Paula Daniels (Commissioner for the City of LA's Board of Public Works), Bruce Saito (LA Conservation Corps), and Alexa Delwiche, respectively

⁹⁶ Based on the input from UEPI and other members of the Task Force, the Chairs and Coordinator chose Beth Steckler, an assistant Urban and Environmental Policy professor at Occidental College.

⁹⁷ The current, abbreviated draft of the Task Force's recommendations can be found in Appendix C

This process demonstrated clearly the scope of the work being undertaken by the Task Force, and just how broad a landscape food policy-making covers. While many of the recommendations listed were generated from Task Force members and correlated directly with their personal work, many had also come from other consulted stakeholders, and were related to areas of the food system not immediately addressed by a specific Task Force member's work. Thus, the sticky-note exercise pointed out gap areas of the food system for the LAFPTF that would need particular attention as no one sitting on the Task Force could speak to them specifically. These areas, generally, were labor, retail, and waste. Unfortunately, these are often not (or under) represented on FPCs, as they can be hard to pinpoint, and are difficult to organize.

Listening Sessions: A Look At Labor

Labor involves a number of different unions: grocery workers, truckers, food processing workers, farm workers, food-packing workers, and a number of others. These unions do not always work well together, but as a group, they can provide a great source of strength for a campaign or endeavor (as evidenced specifically by Obama's achieved majority in Pennsylvania during the 2008 presidential election). A potential source of conflict among the unions could be that if Los Angeles were to specifically focus on the creation of a regional food hub to foster increased access to local food for restaurants and grocery stores, this would lessen (greatly) the need for truckers to transport food imported from other states or countries. Similarly, a focus on increased local food procurement would likely eliminate processing and packing jobs related to readying farther-away food for long-distance transport. Also,

more specifically, if a regional food hub were to be created and constructed, who would build it? A number of other unions would thus be involved. These concerns, among others, were discussed at the Task Force's listening session on labor issues, which brought together grocery workers, farm worker advocates, professors, employees from LAANE (focused on their waste and grocery store campaigns), etc. (There had been a slot for a labor professional/worker on the LAFPTF but the Task Force was not able to fill it).⁹⁸

This was one of a number of listening sessions hosted by the Task Force, each meant to glean information from advocates and professionals from specific fields needing more of a focus. A full list of these sessions can be found in Appendix A. The listening sessions focused on the inclusion of points of view previously unincorporated by the FPTF. Alexa and the members of the Task Force spread the word (the latter through their constituents) and successfully reached many more stakeholders. The sessions detected some previously unheard of concerns, which were brought back to the full FPTF for further discussion. *Addendum, as of 4/24/10: From the concerns raised at the Community Listening Session, the FPTF has begun to examine the deeper issue of trust in government as a potential impasse in their forward progress. Many community members present voiced their concern about the creation of another government body as a means to achieve change. This concern sparked fascinating discussion at the most recent FPTF meeting, and has caused the FPTF to take a step back to evaluate its goals and timeline. It remains to be seen what changes, if any, will be made to future ideas, based on these discussions.*

⁹⁸ Personal interview with Robert Gottlieb, February 24, 2010

Findings

The lessons from both Hartford and Los Angeles are many, and some easier to decipher than others. They are organized here into the following general categories:

Fragmentation and Unity

From both cities, we have seen that it is at least useful to have some type of coordinating body, such as a FPC, to bring together organizations from all different areas of the food system. This body can also generally help to purpose their work, and can work with, or on behalf of, these organizations to find good sources of funding and can consolidate similar work being done by different groups. Having a body like the HFS helps to prevent replication and redundancy, and provides a sense of authenticity to all food systems work in the area.

Resources

One of the main roles of the HFS is to fundraise for the projects that it works to implement and manage. This is an extremely important piece of its work, for without the money brought in by the HFS, many of these programs would not exist, or would serve many fewer people. Also, the HFS is able to do research necessary to support the policy recommendations made by the Advisory Commission. The two bodies working together are able to accomplish quite a lot, and complement each other well.

A major disappointment about the failure of the LAFSHP was the money it had been allocated; the CDD (and other City departments) budgeted \$100,000 for its first year, \$80,000 for its second, \$60,000 for its third, and \$40,000 for its fourth, which the body never saw; However, the Partnership presumably received \$240,000 over the three years of its existence. While some of that money went toward hiring a consultant to better facilitate and organize its activity, some went toward paying the salary of its staff member, who had little interest in the Partnership. Even with these two expenditures, the LAFSHP hardly spent any of the money it was allocated. According to Prof. Gottlieb, “the problem wasn't so much funding as opportunity squandered.”⁹⁹ This fact is particularly ironic, given that the developing situation now in Los Angeles has great potential, but the City and state are deep in debt, and have next to nothing to give to a new group.

Thus, whatever body evolves out of the LAFPTF, it will have to be scrappy. This is perhaps all the more reason for the group to be more of an amalgamation of those already in existence, rather than a superimposed FPC. The City should take the position that it wants to see a focus on Good Food and will do what it can to further this agenda (through adopting a passage into its Municipal Code and paying the salary of a coordinator for the developing group), but that for now, the resources it can devote will not be many, and they will go toward streamlining the existing organizations and work done in the City and County (this suggestion will be discussed further in the *Recommendations* section).

⁹⁹ Personal communication with Prof. Gottlieb. April 9, 2010.

Linkages

The Hartford Food System and Commission have their hands in many different projects and programs, and work with state, city, and county agencies to coordinate action. By approaching food systems work from many different sides, they are generally able to effect their desired changes. The LAFSHP had the potential to do this, as they were a two-pronged organization, but thanks to the previously discussed personnel issues, could not make things work. From the breadth of issue areas represented by members of the Task Force, as well as those at the FPTF's listening sessions, it is clear that there are enough different stakeholders with slightly different agendas that plans of action will need to be multifaceted. This is characteristic of a systems issue and approach, as each piece is inextricably integrated, but also slightly different.

Seat of Control and Politics

Hartford has found it best to have a joint approach- through city government with the Food Advisory Commission, and from a nonprofit angle with the Hartford Food System. While the Advisory Commission classifies itself as a Food Policy Council, the two groups together focus mainly on fostering and developing programs to equalize and better the food system, rather than policy approaches. It seems that the main reason behind locating the Commission in City government is to gain leverage and clout, and to add to the partnership's potential sources of funding. Also, it helps to further the agenda of the HFS and the Commission if there is actual specific language in the City's Municipal Code about the food system. In

addition, by classifying the Commission as a FPC, Hartford situates itself prominently in the ever-growing food movement, something to consider in Los Angeles.

In the 1990s, Los Angeles took a not completely different approach by creating the nonprofit organization in addition to the Partnership; however, while the City informally adopted the Los Angeles Food Security and Hunger Policy, it did not add or detract anything from its Municipal Code, thus not making the same strength of commitment as was done in Hartford. Though unforeseen, this allowed the LAFSHP to dissolve with little accountability. Going forward, it seems best to begin with the creation of a nonprofit, like the HFS or something similar to it, and to capitalize on the interest of members of local (and broader) government, but not to rely too heavily on it for the time being, especially as many community members see this as a relatively useless approach, and there is very little in the way of funding to be gotten from government at this point anyway.

Outreach

Good, effective outreach is extremely important to the success and value of any type of organizational body, especially concerning an issue like food. When I asked Martha Page, the Executive Director of the HFS, if her organization had come across any opposition to its work, she replied, “I’m not aware of any opposition per se... it might be interesting to assess how many people are actually aware that there IS a Commission!”¹⁰⁰ Because the food system is so broad, and because food is much

¹⁰⁰ Personal exchange with Martha Page, January 27, 2010

more easily understood by the public on an individualized basis (what do *I* eat, what do *I* buy, what do *I* cook, etc.),¹⁰¹ it can be very difficult for advocates and organizations to get people to take part in and recognize bodies like FPCs. It is rare that community members sit on these councils, as they often do not see the value in these bodies. As someone studying the subject, I can see that it is very easy for advocates be consumed in the paradigms of food systems language, and to forget that many people never even think beyond their own experience; this is not to say that laypeople are selfish, it is simply difficult to see the food system- much of it is hidden to most people. This is finally beginning to change, with films such as *Food, Inc.* becoming mainstream and sparking discussion and understanding.

In any case, it is very important for FPCs and similar groups to reach out, especially to those community members who do not immediately see a need for them. Education is a necessary component of food systems work, and will need to be a focus in Los Angeles in order to move forward at all. People have begun to recognize that something is rotten, but many don't quite know why or what to do about it (this is when the lack of education that leads to blame on individuals for their bad choices can really get in the way of progress). In his book Closing the Food Gap, Mark Winne writes:

I have observed the enormous difference that contact with real food, the soil, and a vegetable plant can make in the lives of young people... Food competency not only takes root in the school and the home but is nurtured in the community as well...I believe that (community and urban agriculture) offer admirable building blocks for community development and vital training grounds for competent food citizens...Food competency percolates up from the grass roots to city

¹⁰¹ The Frameworks Institute. "Not While I'm Eating." 3, 8

hall, the statehouse, and Capitol Hill. People who are smart about their food choices are also smart and engaged food citizens...¹⁰² Thus, when communities are educated (which would preferably start during youth), they are able to make healthier choices themselves, as well as to advocate for healthier frameworks and systems within which these choices are easier to make.

Recommendations: The Los Angeles Good Food Alliance

The main recommendation I have arrived at through my research is that while Los Angeles does need an organizational body of some sort, the traditional FPC format utilized in many other places around the country will likely not be successful here. The FPC created should not include “policy” in its name. It should focus on being a body that coordinates and adds value to the existing work in Los Angeles, and explore with them to find funding to further their efforts. It should be a body with a foot in government through its connections and possibly membership, but potentially be housed as a coalition, likely a nonprofit one. It should continue to reach out to as many stakeholders as possible throughout the food system to identify those who need help and to be fit with organizations complementary to their own. The Los Angeles Good Food Alliance should begin to meet with as many stakeholders as possible. At its helm should be someone like Alexa, who can function as chief coordinator. The body will convene monthly to assess what needs to be done and with whom to speak to do it. It will also identify funds for existing and developing programs, and will help to oversee projects like increasing the utilization rate of food stamps for those eligible, public outreach and education campaigns

¹⁰² Mark Winne. Closing the Food Gap. 189.

about its work and the broader food system, and fostering discussion with grocery stores about getting better produce onto their shelves, ideally from local sources. Also, the LAGFA should make it a priority to begin work on the creation of a regional Department of Food through the state legislature, likely through the creation of a special district. This will be a long process, which should be started as soon as possible, but will take quite a while to bring to fruition. It will take a great investment by the LAGFA in working with organizations like PolicyLink and others that do advocacy work around the Farm Bill and other state and federal level policies- they will need to elevate the work being done in LA to make an example of it, and to point out lessons to state and federal law and policy makers to be able to get resources to continue and further the existing work. It is extremely necessary to bring about a more regional focus moving forward, for all of the previously mentioned reasons; Also, because it will require such broad buy-in to create something like a truly successful food hub.

This seems like the most reasonable and intuitive step to take to make the food system in Los Angeles better, and perhaps something more like this should have been done in the 1990s, as according to Andy Fisher in June of 1996 “(Los Angeles’ problem) is not that there’s not enough resources. It’s just that there’s a lack of coordination and planning.”¹⁰³ Another reason for this action, as opposed to the creation of a traditional FPC, is that a body with “policy” in its name, and one that promulgates the idea that it can have control over policy making will likely not gain favor from communities who have seen this process begin and end many times

¹⁰³ Jodi Wilgoren, “Council OKs Funds for New Food Agency.” *Los Angeles Times*: June 19, 1996.

already. As previously stated, many community members expressed this concern at the April 7th, 2010 FPTF community listening session held at Community Health Councils (see Appendix A for a complete list of participants from each listening session). Specifically, one participant stated that the language of the Task Force's recommendations was too policy-focused, and did not take into account the organizations that have been working on these issues all along. This participant suggested that resources that could be allocated to a FPC should instead be funneled into those groups already working, rather than detracting from their focus by expending the energy to create another new body.¹⁰⁴ On this subject, Frank Tamborello remarked, "We all need help in what we're doing," and that most of the groups need more resources (mostly monetary).¹⁰⁵ *Addendum as of 4/24/10: Also at the FPTF's most recent meeting, some members reiterated these concerns, specifically mentioning the issue of a lack of trust in government. They noted that if the FPTF wants to see its work come to any sort of fruition, the group would do best not to ignore this broad concern.* One of the Task Force's main goals in creating a new body is to add value to the work already happening around the food system, though many already working in the field still see it merely as a false fresh start.

Many attendees of this meeting shared this dissatisfaction with policy as a solution, displaying the common divide between city government and communities, especially those classified as low-income. From what I can see and understand, the best way to attain buy-in from these communities as well as any and all organizations currently working on food systems issues, is to create the Los Angeles

¹⁰⁴ Minutes from LAFPTF Listening Session at CHC, April 7, 2010.

¹⁰⁵ Personal interview with Frank Tamborello, 3/5/10

Good Food Alliance. As previously stated, this would be a very inclusive body, that would work to coordinate, bridge resource gaps, and facilitate deeper work, but would focus on groups already in existence, rather than on a government-centric approach. It could take the form of a nonprofit, similar to HFS, and would have a coordinator position to run it. The Alliance should be made up of as many existing food systems-related organizations as possible (private, nonprofit, etc) along with government representatives from the City Council, Mayor's office, and related City and County departments (public health, etc). These City and County reps would function mainly to advocate to the Mayor, City Council, and County Board of Supervisors for further funds to pour into the Alliance. People such as Paula Daniels and Greg Kettles (from Mayor Villaraigosa's office) could fill these roles.

Another important piece would be that Los Angeles add the "Good Food" language and definition to its municipal code, so as to publicly declare its intentions. The definition of "Good Food" adopted by the LAFPTF is useful, as it defines intentions and clearly lays out what they desire. To call the body the Los Angeles Good Food Alliance would imply that its members agree with the agenda and language, and will work together to make the vision a reality.

The fact that the LAGFA would be made up mainly of those outside government would make it publicly accountable, as its members would all be community members with constituencies from their own personal organizations to answer to. Something like this has not been realized yet in Los Angeles, and based on past occurrences and the success of Hartford's pairing of **inside** (City of Hartford

Food Advisory Commission) with **outside** (Hartford Food System), it seems a logical next step here.

Finally, the LAGFA would also function as a public educator, developing a curriculum for various different populations around the City and County to communicate the central and shared goals of the LAGFA. This would likely include a proposed mini-curriculum to propose to LAUSD for inclusion in classrooms, a program for parents to be disseminated and explained at farmers' markets and Head Start programs, material to distribute at grocery stores (officially, and with the stores' cooperation), and any number of other targeted groups. To develop this, LAGFA's members would work together, combining the knowledge they have developed over decades of working in the food system in Los Angeles.

Some possible first steps for this Alliance to take, once it is organized are listed below:

- Pass Countywide surplus food ordinance

This ordinance was created by Hunger Action LA for the City of Los Angeles, and was adopted in City government. Adopting the ordinance at a County level would be a good way to begin to reach outside City limits to coordinate food systems work, the eventual goal being to create a more regional network of Good Food. The ordinance in its current form stipulates, generally, that all city-owned and operated buildings must work with groups like Angel Harvest to donate large-scale leftovers from meetings and events, thus not letting perfectly good food go to waste.

- Create regional food hub

This recommendation is discussed at length in the official LAFPTF report, and will not be examined fully in this paper. However, it is a good idea, and should be adopted by the LAGFA as a longer-term goal. The hub would likely take the form of a network of producers, distributors, suppliers, and purchasers throughout the region surrounding Los Angeles County who all share the goal of making the food system in Los Angeles more locally based. Having such a hub would make it easier for large-scale purveyors such as restaurants, hospitals, school districts, etc. to purchase more local food, and would ideally make the food cheaper as more purchasers choose to buy food through it.

- Begin to identify ways of creating a special district to facilitate the creation of a regional Department of Food

No city or state in the United States has an official Department of Food. Neither does the country. As FPCs and similar groups become more prevalent, the chances of a Department such as this at the federal level being created and accepted increase. However, if Los Angeles really does want to become “the Good Food capital of the nation,”¹⁰⁶ it seems that the creation of such a regional Department could be a good place to start. This would be a huge undertaking, and would likely necessitate the creation of a Special District by the state legislature (similar to the Metropolitan Water District).¹⁰⁷ This type of district could encompass many different counties, cities, and water districts, thus allowing for a more organized and streamlined regional approach and jurisdiction. The LAGFA could begin to work on finding

¹⁰⁶ Working draft of The Good Food For All Agenda, LAFPTF, April 2010.

¹⁰⁷ Conversation with Robert Gottlieb, April 5, 2010.

connections in the state legislature to begin conversations about this potential development, as well as decide on the structure, agenda, budget, and personnel of such a department.

- Identify sources of funding for further research and programs- federal especially

One key task of the LAGFA will be to find money for itself. Such a body will suffer the same consequences as have some of those organizations whose umbrella it serves as, if it cannot find ways to fund itself outside of the City and County's parched budgets. Looking to federal grant money, such as The National Fresh Food Financing Initiative (NFFFI)¹⁰⁸ and others, spurred on by the First Lady's efforts could currently be one of its best bets.

- Another agenda item for the LAGFA to focus on would be to save the endangered summer lunch programs for the youth and elderly, currently being served in public parks. The programs are funded by federal dollars, but the meals are served by City employees who work at the parks. With its budget shrinking, the City has planned to eliminate the jobs of those who serve the meals, effectively cutting off the programs that still have federal money behind them. The LAGFA could work with existing groups to find a way for the City to keep these programs running, perhaps through allocating some of that federal money toward hiring federal employees to serve the food. Either way, this is an issue that affects many, and would be another good place to start.

¹⁰⁸ "Schwartz Introduces Resolution to Address Need for Healthy Food Options."
http://www.house.gov/apps/list/press/pa13_schwartz/pr_dec15_freshfoodinitiative.html?utm_source=CFSC+Policy+Updates&utm_campaign=340d2a8fcc-Policy_Update_12_17_0912_17_2009&utm_medium=emails

It is important, though, that through more localized work in the beginning, the LAGFA does not lose sight of the importance of creating a regional body, and giving it more policy capabilities. This will be essential to the furthering of the synchronized work, and give the Good Food Alliance an outlet for their desired programs and policies to implement. Without an explicit policy framework in place, there is less accountability for government officials in carrying out their promises of bettering the food system. Thus, the LA Good Food Alliance should be considered a step along the road to developing more of an integrated approach that considers policymaking one of its top priorities. In their current financial state, neither Los Angeles nor California as a whole can afford to create much in the way of new Departments or Commissions, and so it makes the most sense now to focus on coordinating existing efforts and facilitating the sharing of resources. Once the budget crises have begun to resolve themselves, a more formal approach should be taken.

Conclusions

Returning to my research question of how Los Angeles can best involve all of its stakeholders in the creation of food policy, I have found that likely the most effective approach will be to create an organizational and coordinating body to bring together and streamline the work of organizations around the City and County. This will take a form not entirely unlike that of traditional Food Policy Councils, but will focus more on coordinating and adding weight to work already being done than on policy making. Especially because budgets are currently so tight

in Los Angeles, it is unrealistic to create a policy making body that will legislate, but cannot implement. From here, organizations around the City and County can become members of the Los Angeles Good Food Alliance, and will then have a forum in which to discuss their challenges, plans, and resources, thus synchronizing food system-related work in the area.

Building a healthier food system in Los Angeles and the surrounding region will not be a quick process. Advocates and professionals have been calling for change for decades, but now there is a nationwide food movement, the existence of which will help buoy the disjointed efforts around Los Angeles into something greater, hopefully with more lasting potential than the work that has gone before it.

It is crucial that in Los Angeles of all places, the past is not forgotten. What went wrong with the LAFSHP in the 1990s could easily be repeated now, but with both hindsight and foresight, it is unlikely. Los Angeles is again at an impasse: to go backward would be to further endanger the health of our citizens and our environment. We must move forward.

Appendix A

LA Food Policy Task Force Meetings (Dates)

November 20, 2009
December 11, 2009 (smaller Vision group meeting)
January 21, 2010
February 12, 2010
March 12, 2010
April 23, 2010
May 11, 2010
May 21, 2010
June 2010

LAFPTF Listening Sessions (Dates and themes)

1. Institutional Procurement: March
2. Labor and Economic Development Issues: April 1, 2010
3. Community: April 7, 2010
4. Urban Agriculture: April 10, 2010
5. *City and County Government: April 20, 2010*
6. *Grocery and Retail: April 29, 2010*
7. *Restaurants: May 25, 2010*
8. *Funders: June 11, 2010*

Participants from each session

Institutional Procurement

1. Stephanie Stamps, Compton Unified School District
2. Cindy Crawford, Kaiser Permanente
3. Tony Kuo, LA County Department of Public Health
4. Martin Anenberg, Fresh Point (Sysco)
5. Carlo Brandon, Sof'ella Gourmet Natural Foods
6. Katherine Lederer, Chop't Salad Company (NYC)
7. Renee Guilbault, Le Pain Quotidien and West Central Produce
8. Andrea Azuma, Kaiser Permanente
9. Sharon Cech, UEPI
10. Robert Gilbert, UCLA Sustainability

Labor and Economic Development

1. Sheheryar Kaoosji, Change to Win
2. Goetz Wolff, UCLA School of Urban Planning
3. Edna Bonacich, UC Riverside (and working with Labor Center on Black Workers Center)
4. Jamie Padilla, United Farm Workers

5. Roman Pinal, United Farm Workers
6. Gina Palencar, LAANE
7. Elliott Petty, LAANE, LAFPTF
8. Mariana Huerta, Restaurant Opportunities Center
9. Joann Lo, Food Chain Workers Alliance
10. Betty Hung, Legal Aid Foundation
11. Bobby Tarn, UFCW 770
12. Christina Burrell, UFCW 770
13. Chris Zazueta, UFCW 770
14. Jackie Gitmead, UFCW 770

Community Health Councils/HALA

1. Victoria Browder, LAANE
2. Francesca de la Rosa, WORKS
3. Pri de Silva, HEAC
4. Steve Diaz, LA CAN
5. Karis Eklund
6. Ruth Eklund
7. Heather Fenney, CSU
8. Jesus Garcia, Esperanza
9. Ms. Hill, AHRGS-ACCE
10. Amreen Karmali
11. Jessica Kennedy, UCLA
12. Mary Lee, PolicyLink, LAFPTF
13. Lyneva Mattley, AHRGS-ACCE
14. Famarz Nabain
15. Elliott Petty, LAANE, LAFPTF
16. Veronica Ramirez, Watts Health
17. Alex Reza
18. Etha Robinson
19. Taneisha Roby, Mothernet
20. Tonya Guerilla Salig, Food Not Bombs
21. Jolie Sheppick, WORKS
22. Lydia Treto, LA CAN
23. Ariana Valle, LAANE
24. Linda Valveede, LA CAN
25. Lisa Vasquez, Good Life Gabby
26. Eunice Vergara, WORKS
27. Jeanine Watkins, Mudtown Farms
28. Karen Wong
29. Garrett Broad, USC Annenberg
30. Frank Tamborello, HALA, LAFPTF
31. Gwen Flynn, CHC, LAFPTF

Urban Agriculture

1. Juliette Bellocq, Handbuilt Studios

2. Ali Bhai, Garden School Foundation
3. Edna Bonacich, UC Riverside
4. Garrett Broad, USC Annenberg
5. Brigitte Caldero, Urban Semillas
6. Glen Duke, Los Angeles Community Garden Council, LAFPTF
7. Paula Daniels, City of LA Board of Public Works, LAFPTF
8. Jesse Dubois, Farmscape
9. Arturo Gonzalex, East LA Community Arts and Murals Program, Vermont Square, Avalon Gardens
10. Melissa Guerrero, Mia Lehrer and Associates
11. Meredith Hackleman, Farmlab Grower
12. Guy Hatzvi, Metabolic Studio, Farmlab
13. Andrew Hunt, Grow Good
14. Eran James Cal Poly Landscape Architecture
15. Jessica Kennedy, UCLA Urban Planning
16. Tara Kolla, Silverlake Farms
17. Charles Lee, Lavender Hill Farm
18. Jed Lind
19. Jaime Lopez-Wolters, Metabolic Studio, Farmlab
20. Miguel Luna, Urban Semillas
21. Faramarz Nabavi, The Regenerative Communities Project
22. Esther Park, K.A.C.-LA
23. Michael Pinto, Project Food LA
24. Brad Pregerson, Grow Good
25. Al Renner, Los Angeles Community Garden Council
26. Erick Sanchez, Team Green Bite
27. Kavita Sharma, Los Angeles Community Garden Council
28. Mark Teschauer
29. Odis Walker, Greater Watts
30. David Weinstein, Health& LeJeune
31. Teague Weybright, LA Conservation Corps
32. Eric Whitemyer, Cal Poly Landscape Architecture
33. Goetz Wolff, UCLA Urban Planning

City and County Government

Grocery/Retail

Restaurants

Funders

Appendix B

**CITY OF LOS ANGELES FOOD POLICY TASK FORCE
MEMBER ROSTER
NOVEMBER 20, 2009**

Last Name	First Name	Title	Affiliation	Phone Number	E-mail Address
Azuma	Andrea	Project Manager, Community Benefit	Kaiser Permanente	(626) 405-5572	Andrea.M.Azuma@kp.org
Dake	Glen	Landscape Architect	LA Community Garden Council	(323) 663-6580	gdake@pacbell.net
Daniels (Co-Chair)	Paula	Commissioner	Board of Public Works, City of LA	(213) 359-2113	Paula.Daniels@lacity.org
Flynn	Gwen	Project Director	Community Health Council/South LA	(323) 295-9372 ext. 226	gflynn@chc-inc.org
Gold	Jonathan	Food Critic	LA Weekly		quodlibet9@aol.com
Gottlieb (Chair)	Bob	Executive Director	Occidental College, UEPI	(310) 617-0657	gottlieb@oxy.edu
Guilbalt	Renee		West Central Produce	(213) 629-3600	rguilbalt@westcentralproduce.com
Jaime	Ruth		Jaime Farms Los Angeles	(909) 395-7258	ruth@jaimefarms.com
Katona	Karly	Deputy	Supervisor Mark Ridley Thomas	(213) 974-2222	KKatona@bos.lacounty.gov
Kettles	Gregg	Deputy Counsel	Mayor's Office, City of LA	(213) 978-0777	Gregg.Kettles@lacity.org

Lee	Mary	Attorney and Associate Director	PolicyLink	(323) 213-0674	mary@policylink.org
Luna	Miguel	Executive Director	Urban Semillas	(818) 568-9139	miguel@urbansemillas.com
Petty	Elliott	Director, Healthy Grocery Stores Project	Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy (LAANE)	(213) 977-9400 ext. 133	epetty@laane.org
Saito (Co-Chair)	Bruce	Executive Director	Los Angeles Conservation Corps	(213) 362-9000 ext. 203	bsaito@lacorps.org
Sharp	Matt	Senior Advocate	California Food Policy Advocates	(213) 482-8200	matt@cfpa.net
Tamborello	Frank	Director	Hunger Action Los Angeles	(213) 388-8228	frank@hungeractionla.org
Tremaine	Jean	Director, Nutrition Program	Department of Public Health	(213) 351-7864	jtremaine@ph.lacounty.gov
Woo	Michael	Dean, College of Environmental Design	Cal State Pomona	(909) 869-2667	mwoo@csupomona.edu
Yee	Larry	Advisor Emeritus	UC Cooperative Extension	(805) 340-4671	lkyee@ucdavis.edu
Zajfen	Vanessa	Program Manager	Occidental College, UEPI	(323) 341-5092	vzajfen@oxy.edu

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Appendix C

Recommendations of the LA Food Policy Task Force thus far, as expressed in working draft of the Good Food For All Agenda, the official report of the LA Food Policy Task Force. For a more specific look at these recommendations, see the final report, due for release in June, 2010.

The Good Food for All Agenda: Key Themes

To achieve our essential strategic outcomes, the Good Food for All agenda urges the City and County to take action in five key areas to build on and add value to food reforms underway in the Los Angeles region.

1. **Empower Residents to make the good food choice the easy food choice.** Address high levels of hunger and obesity by empowering residents to make the good food choice the easy food choice by increasing economic stability of residents; increasing the affordability of good food; improving the nutritional quality of school meals; and strengthening the emergency food system.
2. **Return to Our Agricultural Roots for Long Term Food Security.** Make Los Angeles a model for the nation in growing a sustainable, regional food economy by prioritizing the development of a Regional Food Hub; incorporating quality food system jobs and small food business opportunities into economic development plans; and supporting residents efforts to grow and sell their own food.
3. **Make Our Cities Good Food Friendly** by improving the food environment in underserved communities and communities of color to reduce health disparities and race and class inequities; determining Good Food criteria and incorporating preferences for Good Food in City, County, and LAUSD procurement rules; and encouraging food businesses to source more Good Food.
4. **Educate and Inspire Our Communities to Become Good Food Champions** by strengthening nutrition, food system, and food culture literacy and integrating food systems language into local and regional planning documents, school curriculum, and existing City and County programs.
5. **Create a Food Policy Council** to strengthen coordination, collaboration, and innovation.

Appendix D

From the *Good Food for All Agenda* (LAFPTF Report):

Our Vision, Purpose, Mission, and Guiding Principles

Los Angeles is a world city, with a feast of food riches. It sits within a region that has an amazing potential for growing and consuming fresh and healthy food with its mild Mediterranean climate, remarkable natural resources, varied geography, and diverse and enterprising population with a wonderful range of food knowledge and taste. All that makes it possible for Los Angeles to become a leader in Good Food; food that is defined as healthy, affordable, fairly, sustainably, and regionally produced, and accessible to all. And we have a flourishing food movement in Los Angeles that has inspired new opportunities in the production, processing, and distribution of this Good Food and that has enabled Los Angeles to become a place where innovation can be eagerly pursued and readily accepted.

That is the vision of what is possible. But these are troubling, if not desperate times. Food banks and pantries are overflowing with more people arriving at their doorsteps than ever before. Poverty and unemployment are endemic and provide the backdrop for this enormous gap in food security. At the same time, our current sources of food largely consist of cheap, high calorie, low nutrient, and highly processed food shipped from far away and grown by unsustainable means. Because of that persistent poverty and growing unemployment, hunger has remained a chronic problem in the region while the consumption of too many cheap calories and too little exercise has contributed to a diabetes and obesity epidemic. Good Food that is fresh and healthy is not available in many low-income areas and neighborhoods of color. Moreover, our food retail environment continues to be largely segregated by race. Many sections of the city lack full service grocery stores or supermarkets. Despite being densely populated, retailers have been reluctant to locate in these neighborhoods making it even more difficult for residents to obtain good food.

Developing a thriving regional food system and making Good Food a reality will require political will, leadership, policy changes, and commitment. It will need financial resources from both the public and private sector and partnerships between government agencies that can promote policies to facilitate a more sustainable and equitable food system. It will have to put in place mechanisms to assist low-income persons with purchasing food. And it will need participation by many agencies and individuals, both non-profit and for profit, which have the expertise and experience to create and implement many of the necessary changes. Those changes require a vision of what could be.

A Good Food Vision:

- Los Angeles achieves prominence in production, distribution, and consumption of Good Food.
- Regional infrastructure for production, processing, distribution and marketing of Good Food is substantially increased, improved, and developed.
- The new regional food system has created and retained green food sector jobs with opportunities for training and upward mobility available to all residents of all races, ethnic and socio economic backgrounds.
- Increased investment in the regional food shed and retail economy provides greater access to Good Food in all neighborhoods.
- Increased investments in the economic stability of residents through jobs, healthcare and public assistance reduces hunger.
- Increased investment in nutrition programs strengthens the health of residents.
- Improved food access and consumption is a catalyst to reduce class and race inequities in neighborhoods
- Health disparities are reduced due to increased access to nutritious food.
- The healthiest food choices are the easiest food choices.
- City and County policies encourage and incentivize the development of healthy food retail in underserved areas, including communities of color.
- More small and mid sized family farms have emerged in the foodshed and thrive.
- The health and well being of all workers along the supply chain is a fundamental component of a sustainable food system and workers are treated with respect, justice, and dignity.
- Food system-related environmental quality is greatly improved.
- Community residents have the awareness of how food is produced and the opportunity to learn in school (and elsewhere) how to produce their own food and make healthy food choices.
- Cooking food is seen as an important value and resources are available, including access to affordable, fresh, and culturally appropriate food, and storage and cooking capacity to transform preparing food into a daily celebration.

Purpose of the Food Policy Task Force

The Los Angeles Food Policy Task Force has been charged with identifying how a Good Food policy agenda could be accomplished and how to get there. Many of us are already participating and building food programs and championing policy initiatives towards that goal. The Task Force seeks to further develop the policy foundation and institutional structure for the support of a new and vibrant

regionally based food system that will strengthen the links between where food is grown and where it is consumed within that same region. By pursuing such food-related policies and strategies, the health and well being of the residents of the Los Angeles region can be significantly improved, and there will be greater food security and access to Good Food for all residents, and increased sustainability throughout the regional food system.

The Mission

The Los Angeles Food Policy Task Force is assessing the state of food in the Los Angeles region and identifying opportunities for local and regional government entities in conjunction with Good Food advocates and champions to improve the production, processing, distribution, marketing, and consumption of Good Food. We are convening stakeholders of the food system in the Los Angeles region to identify next steps towards those goals. We are conducting research, developing a framework for how new policies can be established and implemented, and equipping public and private institutions and Good Food advocates with a strategic plan to move forward.

Guiding Principles for Los Angeles Food Policy Task Force and Post Task Force

(These have mostly been lifted from other sources. They are meant, at this point, to be straw principles from which we can develop our own. They are in no particular order nor are they inclusive of all that we may consider.)

1. To ensure quality of life, as well as environmental and economic health in Los Angeles, the regional food system must promote public health, environmental sustainability and social responsibility.
2. It is every person's right to have good, nutritious food that is also affordable and culturally appropriate. Eliminating hunger and ensuring access to healthy and nutritious food for all residents, regardless of economic means, is a concern of all public entities in the region.
3. The region shall promote economic opportunities in the food sector that create green jobs and local food enterprises.
4. Employees in regional food systems should work under safe conditions, be paid a living wage, and be afforded opportunities for training and entrepreneurship.
5. The region shall support policies to preserve the region's prime agricultural lands.
6. The City and region shall promote innovative programs that educate food system stakeholders and the general public on the value of healthy food, and

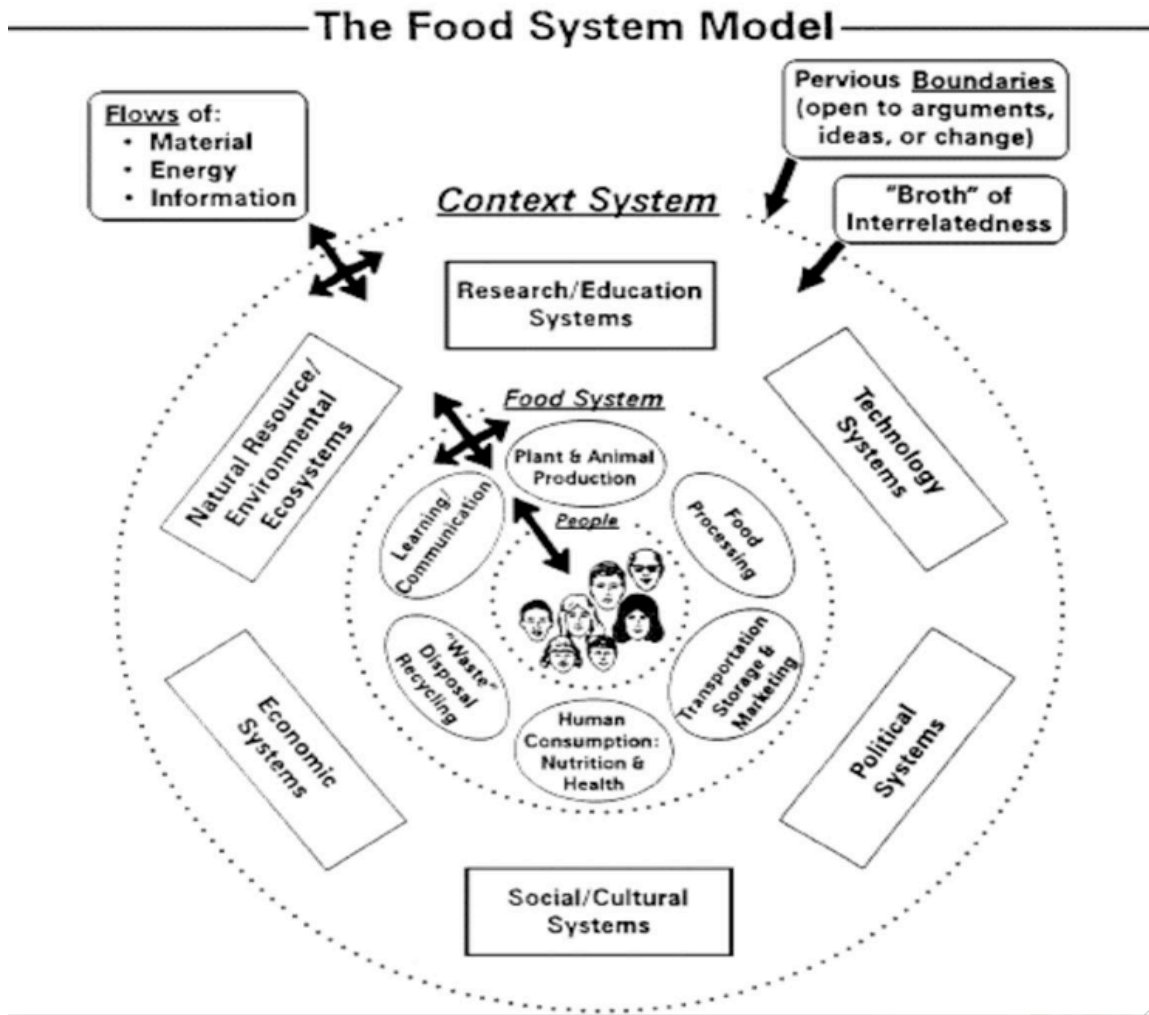
an equitable and sustainable food system.

7. The City and region shall advocate for state and federal policies that support the principles of this initiative.
8. Decisions and deliberations must be made at every level by bodies and methods that fairly represent the diversity of affected views and interests and are not dominated by any single view or interest.
9. The health and economic well being of every community is dependent on ample and equitable generation, retention and circulation of capital.
10. The regional food system will strive to promote policies and implement practices that help to ensure that the regions resources are not degraded, acting from sound ecological practices to protect and preserve the region for future generations.
11. Food is a part of our cultures whose customs and diversity enrich our communities.
12. Local food systems must be organized and managed to ensure sustainability with specific criteria for ecological integrity, social equity, and economic viability to be determined at the local level.
13. Stakeholders of the regional food system will act with openness and integrity, encourage inclusiveness and diversity, and honor equity and self-determination.
14. Consumers will be provided with complete information on where and how food within the region is produced.
15. The knowledge, experience and expertise of the community are of equal value and significance to that of traditional research and conventional data analysis.

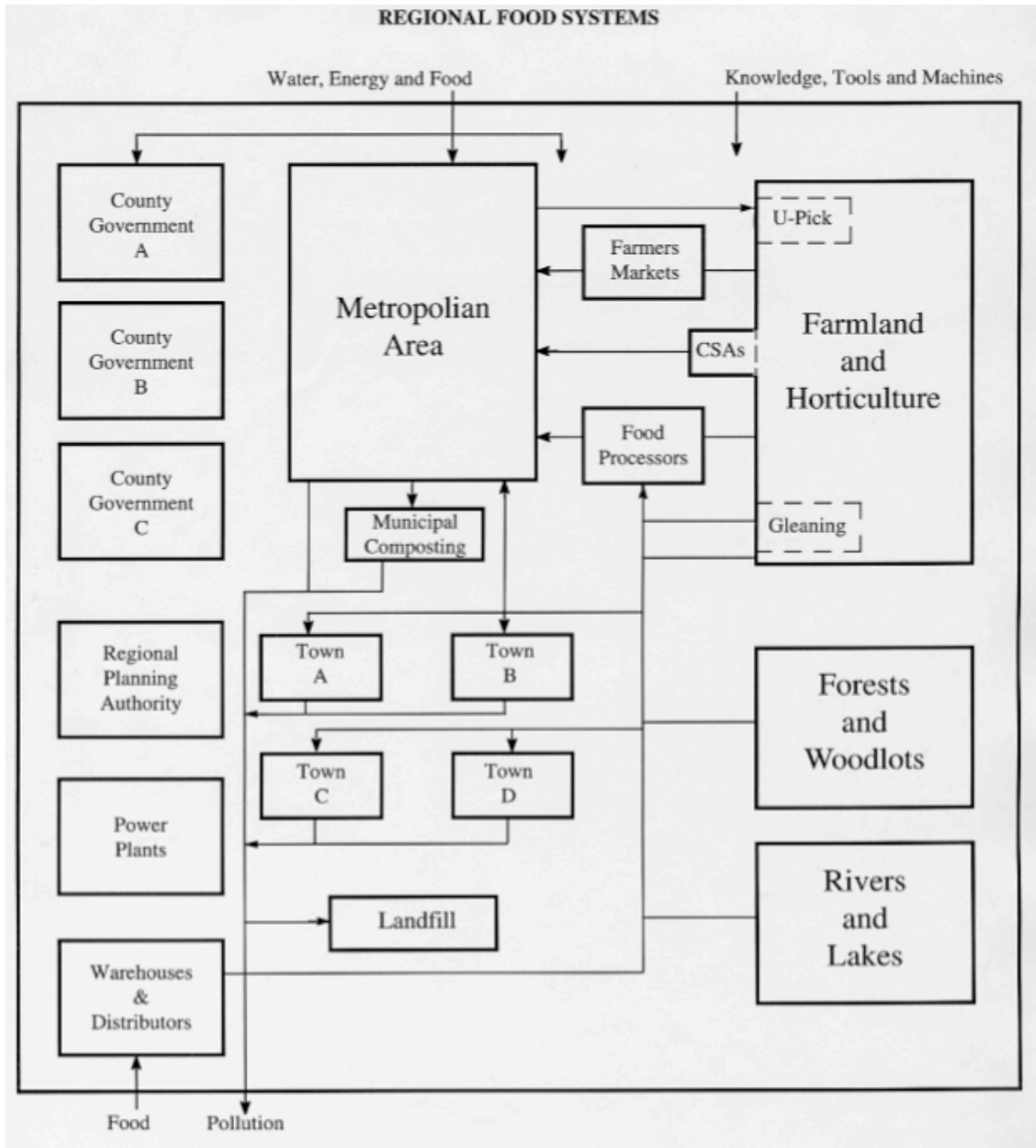
Appendix E

Food Systems Graphics:

From San Francisco Food Systems:



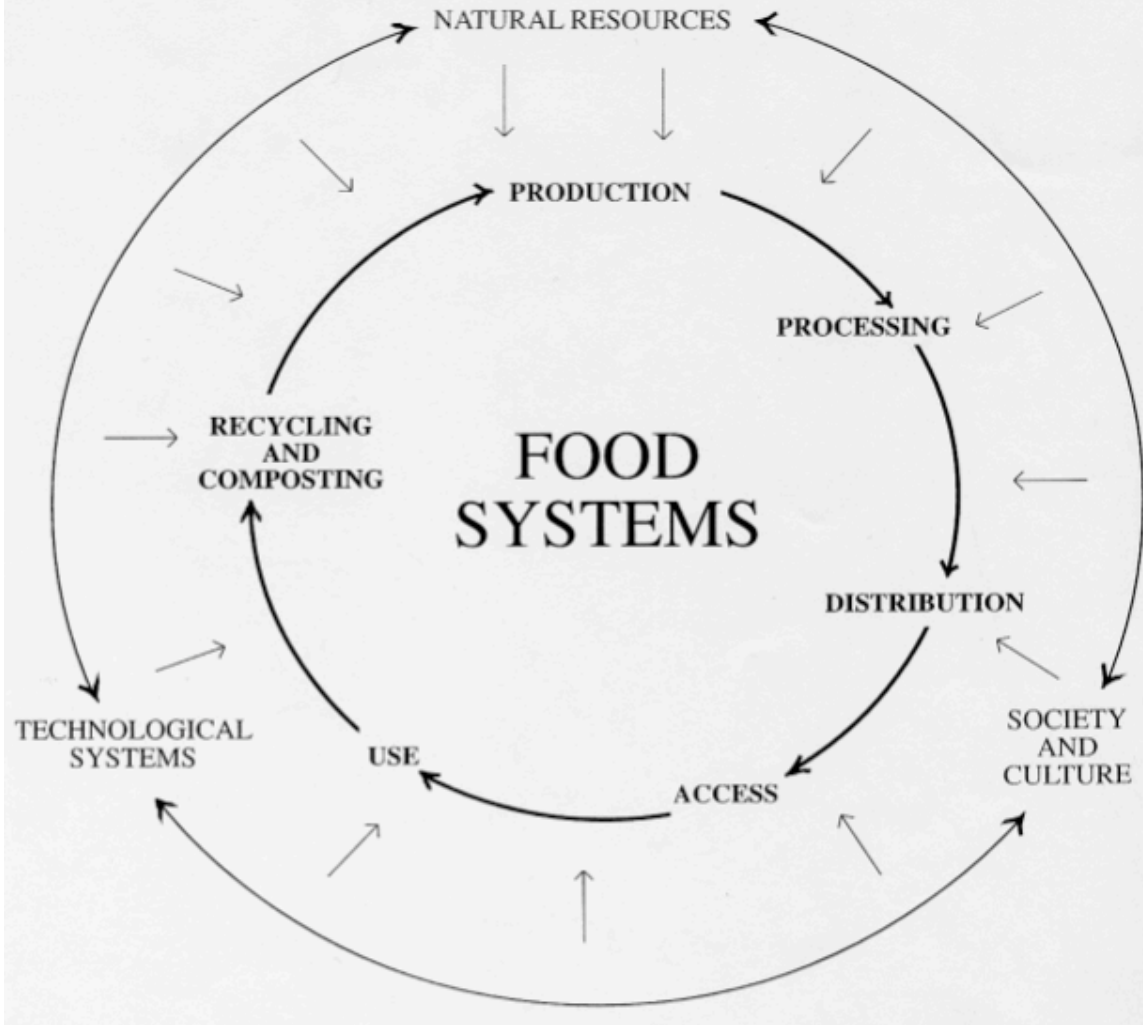
From Kenneth Dahlberg:



LOCAL AND REGIONAL FOOD SYSTEMS: A KEY TO HEALTHY CITIES

Kenneth A. Dahlberg, Dept. of Political Science
Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI 49008

WHAT ARE LOCAL FOOD SYSTEMS?



Appendix F

VACH Members

1. Irene Gomez, Mayor Riordan's Office
2. David Kessler, Mayor Riordan's Office
3. Blanca Cintron Scot, Mayor Riordan's Office
4. Bishop Charles E. Blake, West Angeles Church of God and Christ
5. Elizabeth Riley, Interfaith Hunger Coalition
6. Stephen Saltzman, Campaign for Life
7. Honorable Robert Farrell
8. Robert Gottlieb, UCLA School of Public Policy/Social Research
9. Berta Saavedra, L.A. Alliance for a Drug Free Community

VACH Hearing Topics

1. The Young and the Elderly- Schools and Seniors
2. Food Assistance Programs, Poverty, and Hunger
3. Retail Issues
4. Emergency Food Needs and the Homeless
5. Nutrition Education and Nutritional Needs- Nutritional Issues Among Low Income Persons
6. Urban Agriculture

LA Food Security and Hunger Partnership Members

1. Doris Bloch
2. Tom C. Chabolla
3. Rod Diamond
4. Dr. William Epps
5. Bob Erlenbusch
6. Honorable Robert Farrell- **Staff**
7. John Flores
8. Robert Gottlieb
9. Kenneth Hopwood
10. Marion Kalb
11. David Kim
12. Rachel Mabie
13. William W. McClintock
14. Berta Saavedra
15. Stephen Saltzman- **Chair**
16. Kiran Saluja
17. Juanita Tate
18. Helen Ver Duin Palit
19. Frank Tamborello

Appendix G

Interview questions for Connecticut professionals:

1. What is your role in the Council?
2. How was it decided that New Haven needed or should have a food policy council (F.P.C)?
3. What is the division of labor in the Council?
4. How do you (the F.P.C) address the extremely wide variety of interests at play in the area?
5. What, if any, policies have you written? Have they been adopted? At what level?
6. What is the amount of interaction between this F.P.C and other levels of government?
7. Do you have any non-profit involvement?
8. Do you have any opportunity for citizen engagement?
9. What, if any, is the metric you use to measure your effectiveness?
10. How is the F.P.C funded?
11. How long have you been in existence in your current format?
12. What is the personnel makeup of the F.P.C? How do you fill positions?
13. Who is in charge of the F.P.C?
14. Does the F.P.C have any opposition? If so, who? What is their argument?
15. What is your method for involving stakeholders? Do you have listening sessions (or something similar)?
16. What is your method (if you have one) for utilizing stakeholder input?
17. Can you think of anyone else with whom I should speak?

Interview questions for Los Angeles professionals:

1. What is your current position?
2. What role do you play in food policy in Los Angeles?
3. What or whose interests do you represent? Who are your constituents?
4. What would you/ your organization like to see change with a shift in Los Angeles food policy?
5. Do you think a local-government-run food policy council is the best way to bring about these changes?
6. In what, if any, way would you want to be involved with such a body?
7. What, if any, recommendations have your organization already made in this realm? Have they been heeded?
8. How do you think stakeholders and community members can play more of an important role in the process of food policy development?
9. Did you have any role in the Los Angeles Food Security and Hunger Partnership (1996-1999)? If so, what do you think needs to be different about this one?
10. What would be some concrete ways you think the success or failure of a potential F.P.C (or similar body) in Los Angeles could be measured?

11. What do you think should be done to effectively involve the public in the creation of food policy in Los Angeles?
12. Same as above, but the stakeholders- those of whom aren't on the FPTF
13. What was the outcome of the VACH's public hearings?
14. Do you think it would be useful to have similar hearings once the FPTF has a draft of its report?
15. How were the hearings in 1995 publicized? How did they work- who moderated them, who answered questions, how were questions chosen to be answered?
16. What are some ways in which you think the FPTF (or its next incarnation) should go about trying to engage those members of the public who do not grasp even the idea of the food system?
17. What are your biggest takeaways from your involvement in the VACH and/or the LAFSHP?

Appendix H

The Northeast Partnership

Created in 1997 based on a paper written jointly by Mark Winne (formerly of HFS) and Hugh Joseph of the Tufts School of Nutrition Science and Policy, the Northeast Partnership is the HFS initiative to become more of a regionally associated body: “Although HFS’s primary focus remains on Hartford, it has come to realize that state, regional, and national ties are also valuable in developing long-term solutions to food insecurity...”¹⁰⁹ This is a clear and necessary lesson for local councils to learn, and has hopefully been internalized here in Los Angeles. The Northeast Partnership hosted a conference soon after its inception that drew 200 professionals and advocates from all over the region: “Conference attendees...sought valuable information on program development, and in some cases discovered people working on similar issues right in their own town. What they also realized... was that each region had a variety of food and agriculture problems that no single group could solve...”¹¹⁰ Both of these are key lessons, and are definitely true in Los Angeles; new groups arise each day that serve similar purposes, and with a coordinating body such as an FPC in place, could be made more effective through getting them in touch with other related work already happening in the area. Also, there are some issues in Los Angeles, specifically those related to water use, land use, anything agricultural, etc, that cannot be solved by one single group, as they involve a number of overlapping jurisdictions (City, County, region,

¹⁰⁹ The Hartford Food System- A Guide to Developing Community Food Programs, Replication Manual

¹¹⁰ Ibid. 36

state, Metropolitan Water District, etc.). Unfortunately, and due to the allocation of resource more immediately needed elsewhere, the Northeast Partnership has become defunct. However, the ideas at its core remain valuable to keep in mind moving forward in Los Angeles.

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