

Session #3: Policy and Advocacy Approaches Toward a Healthy Sustainable Food System

Presenters: Washtenaw County Food Policy Council (Markell Miller, Germaine Smith)
Detroit Food Policy Council (Winona Bynum, Amy Kuras)

Structure: Washtenaw: no 501c3, no paid staff
Workgroups to accomplish policy agenda items
Policy Agenda- available on website
Origins: County Health Department Seed Money
Detroit:501c3, paid staff
Workgroups, developed priorities to get work done

Actions:

Washtenaw:

Worked with County when county was due to review its purchasing policy. Worked to making purchasing policy more sustainable.

Food Access and Nutrition Policy Team (P.A.T.): Worked with local DHHS to improve customer experience (barrier) to applying for food stamps. Food gatherers worked with community partners who went to DHHS and did the process with clients.

Local community foundation- secure funding for GIS mapping to create food access maps

Bee Friendly work: policy work to advocate for local groundskeeping to be bee friendly. Bee Friendly door to door canvassing. Worked with property management companies to be bee friendly. Normal Park in Ypsilanti is the first Bee Friendly park in the state.

Detroit:

Three Main Priority areas:

Access

Malnutrition

Economic injustice in the food system

Actions:

Urban Agriculture

School policy

Community planning- including emergency preparedness

Community events: "Taste of African Heritage"
"Golden Beet Awards" "Detroit Food Summit" "Youth Summit"

Q & A

Q: How do you keep track of community progress of multiple agencies?

A: Spreadsheets!

Q: Best fit for "home agency" for food policy councils?

A: Those who have time, resources and are willing to!

Examples: Detroit- started from community action. Ottawa

County- came of county government

Q: Elaborate more on school policy

A: Federal level= school meals, Michigan ag surplus

(connecting with food banks)

Local level= school boards!

City level= worked with city leaders to encourage ag/food

use for vacant land and blight properties (vs. developments)

Q: What are top things for food policy councils?

A: Connecting on personal commitment

Network & build relationships

Capitalize on funding opportunity