Getting fresh local produce to kids and seniors

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

American Public Health Association Conference
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Acknowledgments

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Northwest Agriculture Business Center
and WA State Dept. of Agriculture
1. Project Objectives
2. Assessment & Training
3. Purchase & Delivery Models
4. Challenges & Successes
5. Questions
- Increase access/affordability of fresh produce for senior meal programs by developing procurement models with local farms
- Assess readiness and provide training/tools to help senior meal programs use more fresh local produce
- Assess feasibility of procurement models for home and center based childcare programs
U.S. Deputy Secretary of Agriculture, Kathleen Merrigan, visits the Central Area Senior Center, a Farm to Table pilot site. March 2, 2011.
Assessments

Meet People Where They Are

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

Cooking skills training for childcare providers.
Make the Healthy Choice the Easy Choice

- Cooking demonstrations & skill building sessions
- Seasonality Charts
- Recipe Bank
- Marketing Materials
  - Table tents at senior meals
  - “Backpack mail” for childcare programs
  - Video Stories
One Size Doesn’t Fit All

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

Full Circle Farm makes a delivery to the Refugee and Immigrant Family Center Food Hub
## Challenges

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

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

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

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

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

It’s All About Relationships

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

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

“Good Food Bag”

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

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

Elderly participants report eating healthier food outside the center

Cooking skills training for childcare providers.
Questions?

Myth busting at Prospect Preschool
Green vegetables + Kids = Fun
For More Information

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No Disclosures