



## San Mateo County Food System Alliance

### October 27, 2009

### Meeting Results

#### Attendance

	Jim Anderson	√	Kim Borick for Lisa Wasilewski	√	Gail Raabe
	Ryan Casey	√	Jim Howard	√	Francine Serafin-Dickson
√	David Kane	√	Jered Lawson	√	Susan Stansbury
	Gladwyn D'Souza		Scott Morrow	√	Erin Tormey
√	Tim Frahm	√	Kellyx Nelson	√	Lennie Roberts
√	Robin Galas		Jack Olsen	√	Terry Witzel
√	Jennifer Gross	√	Pietro Paravanno		Marilyn Johns

with Serene Cooper, member of the Ag Innovations Network facilitation team

**Guests:** Reggie Knox, Central Coast Program Coordinator, CA Farm Link and Kendra Klein, Intern at Pie Ranch and is studying food systems at UC Berkeley's Department of Environmental Science, Policy & Management.

Thanks again to Jared Lawson for hosting our meeting and taking us on a tour of Pie Ranch!

#### INFO SHARE

Pietro: Happy to hear that Ag Innovations is working on new food system alliance groups in Modesto, Sacramento and San Diego. We have got to continue to get people not involved in the food system at the table like in San Mateo. I had the opportunity to give my input as a fisherman for a sustainable fishery policy for the Obama administration's National Ocean Policy. It was great to be able to advocate for fish/seafood as a part of sustainable/food security policy.

Kay O'Neill is working on San Mateo County's stimulus funded program call TANF Subsidized Employment to create and subsidize green jobs for low-income residents with children. There is a possible opportunity to channel some of our TANF Subsidized Employment funding to farm workers through the ARRA National Farm workers Jobs program. Kay is eager to discuss this potential use of subsidized employment (for Cal Works clients and people making less than 200% above of the federal poverty level). She is making a first attempt to connect with SMC food systems and health advocates. She would like help guiding her to the right people to explore how we can leverage grant funding to improve health, prosperity and food systems in SMC. **Action item:** *Get Kay scheduled to come and speak to the alliance.*

Jenn: Grants available for: prevention in communities, farm to school activities, and presenting at conferences.

Terry: A good example of how being involved in a regional food system alliance works for you is Pietro's introduction of Second Harvest to a source for seafood. Other updates from Second Harvest: we are utilizing a congressional fellow to work with us on a food stamp study, we just received a grant for needy families, and we are serving 1/3 more people this past quarter.

Jim: NRCS has been working on rolling out new programs from the Farm Bill. The Farm Bureau, NRCS and RCD are working well as a cooperative conservation partnership.

Kellyx: New HMB Marine Visitor's Center coming together to make a land/sea connection. RCD is working on a ground water study in the mid-coast region and Ag water conservation projects. Trout Unlimited is working on the implications to fish with farmer overwatering issues. Farm Bureau and RCD are working together to provide cover crop seed to farmers. If you're interested contact Tim or Kellyx. RCD and NRCS are cost sharing to provide technical assistance. 2008 State of the Sanctuary report is out. <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/report2008/welcome.html>

Serene: Update from Scott Morrow that there will not be a Board of Supervisors presentation before January 2010. *Action Item/Follow up: check in with Scott to reschedule presentations*

Miriam Volat is Ag Innovations Network new Director of the Alliance Network. She will be contacting alliance members to get input for an alliance redesign for next year. We'll hear more about proposed plans at the November meeting.

Jared: Kendra Klein as been interning at Pie Ranch and has been working on Farm to Hospital research. We are hoping that since she is a student of Michael Pollan, she can get him to come and talk to us. Pie Ranch would like to be involved in more projects in SMC.

I've been talking with folks who are interested in joining the San Mateo Alliance: Bill and Christina from Potrero Nuevo are new farmers, Nancy Schaub from Tunitas Creek Ranch (possible funder and has offered her land for land-based learning projects), and Richard Rathbun is a bayside resident who is President of Foundation for Global Community and has a personal interest in developing sustainable food systems.

Jared has been working with Reggie from CA Farm link on initiatives that will engage and support new farmers. Pie Ranch will be hosting a workshop and mixer on December 15<sup>th</sup> designed to connect new farmers with access to land and capital. Would the San Mateo Alliance like to sponsor this event? YES!

Reggie Knox, CA Farm link: I've been working with CAFF, the Farm Bureau and CA Farm link for many years and worked on a farm in Santa Cruz. Our goal is to keep land in farming, link aspiring farm owners to land, and keep new farmers entering into farming. We are very excited about the December 15<sup>th</sup> workshop and would love to have the alliance involved.

## **DISCUSSION HIGHLIGHTS**

### **December 15, 2009<sup>th</sup> Workshop & Mixer for Aspiring Farmers & Land Owners at Pie Ranch**

- CA Farm link and Pie Ranch are putting together a 4-5 hour workshop for new farmers on how to access land and capital to begin new farming ventures. There will be a networking mixer in the evening to introduce new farmers to land owners with land for lease or sale.
- Sliding scale or low cost workshop for farmers and evening event is free for all

- Expected outcome: New land opportunities for aspiring farmers
- San Mateo FSA has agreed to co-host this event with CA Farm link
- RCD/Kellyx = RCD may be interested in co-sponsoring, possible county parks and blue circle involvement
- Ways the alliance can support the event: Outreach, Food & Volunteers the day of the event,
- Outreach to aspiring farmers and landowners. How do we get in contact with new farmers or those who want to get into farming? Ideas: CA Farm link database, ALBA, POST, RCD, UC Santa Cruz, UC Elkus, existing producers, Farm Bureau,
- Mailing lists: Farm Bureau, Ag Commissioner, Committee for Green Foothills, Farm link database, Ag Innovations Alliance Network, Conexions
- Slowfood Community, Williamson Act property owners who will be non-renewed
- Distribute fliers: Farmers Market, other?
- Funding opportunities: TBD, See Reggie AT CA Farm Link
- Members of the alliance who are interested in supporting the event: Gail, Erin, Kim, Kellyx, Lennie

## Membership

### *Nomination & Recruitment Process*

- **Proposal #1 - Keep existing process, with changes**
  1. Membership is initiated by nomination from a sitting member. A departing member may suggest a nomination. There must be group consensus in order to decide on the nominee.
  2. A minimum of two SMFSA sitting members [**CHANGE TO: One SMFSA sitting member will**] meet with the nominee to discuss and ascertain both willingness/commitment to serve and the willingness and capacity to subscribe to the purpose and principles of SMFSA.
  3. The SMFSA sitting member shall then report back to the group at its next regular meeting. The nominee must be approved by group consensus. [**ADD: If there is a match, the potential member will have an option to attend one meeting to further determine interest**].
- Members indicated during the discussion that they did not think it was feasible for two members of the alliance to “interview” a potential candidate and trust their fellow members’ judgment.
- Members also voiced the opinion that members could come and check out the alliance and then decline membership if they wished. The alliance, by inviting potential members to come to a meeting after the recruiting process, are essentially vetting and approving nominees as members.
- **Proposal #2 –New members begin service in January of each year - Was not adopted.**
- Both email discussion and group conversation indicated that members did not want interested parties to wait until January to join the alliance. Members wanted to keep the ability to recruit members on an “as needed” basis until the alliance maintained an appropriate size and composition.
- **Decision:** *One person will contact the potential member to determine interest and match and give them an option to attend a meeting and check us out. If they are interested they will begin membership at the next alliance meeting.*
- **Action item:** *Amend constitution to officially adopt changes.*

## Membership

### *Stakeholder Analysis of current and needed members*

- Categories: six main categories from which to draw membership. Within each category there are specific interest groupings that need to be considered as valuable perspectives to be represented in SMFSA. Representation from these interests will ensure the appropriate balance necessary to achieve the SMFSA purpose.

1. Agriculture: Including Production and ag-business (e.g. farmers, ranchers, dairymen), Fisheries, Timber, Floriculture, and “New” Farmers (less than 10 years).
2. Civic: Including Media, Government (agencies/departments), Community Service, Public Health, Health and Wellness, Health care, Education, and Garden-based programs.
3. Distribution: Including Retail and wholesale, Restaurateurs, and Direct Marketing (e.g. CSA, Farmer’s Market).
4. Environmental: Including Environmental, Natural Resources Management, Conservation, and Open Space.
5. Labor: Including Employees of farming operations and/or their advocates and The Workforce within the food system.
6. Residents: Including Community members, Retirees, and the General Workforce.
  - Current alliance composition *including active members only*:  
Ag (4-5), Distribution (3), Environmental (5), Civic (5), Labor (0), Resident (1)  
There was a healthy discussion that many members identify with more than one category but for the exercise of reviewing stakeholder representations, alliance members were assigned only one category.
  - Discussion about recruiting members in the other categories as well as additional sectors within each category

#### *Member Nominations*

- The group brainstormed a list of potential nominees with a brief description of their perspective and potential contribution.
- We reviewed the nominees one by one as a group and indicated with a thumb’s up to recruit, and a side-ways thumb for “I need more information to make a decision.”
- All thumbs up nominees were agreed upon by consensus, and members were asked to contact these nominees.
- Nominees who were approved to be recruited  
Kerry Lobel, Puente de la Costa Sur (Robin to recruit)  
Reggie Knox, California Farm link (Jared to recruit)  
Doniga Markegard, Coastside Rancher (Kellyx to recruit)  
Dina Izzo, New Leaf Produce Buyer (Erin to recruit)

#### **National Farm Bureau recent position opposing the Obama administration’s climate change bill, sighting economic impact to agriculture**

- One member suggested that this might be a negotiation posture
- Another member reminded the group to be aware that there is a lot of climate change skepticism in the conventional Ag community
- A member stated that in SMC 40% of GHG is related to transportation and that the alliance might consider this as a focus if it works on climate change issues.

#### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

##### **Land Use/Ponds**

- Kellyx drafted a case statement for the Land Use Committee for the a citizen call to action
- The committee will review the draft
- Committee members: (Kellyx, Tim, Gail & Jim, added: Lennie & Jared)

##### **Garden Based Education (GBE)**

- Robin to draft citizen call to action
- The committee will review the draft

- Committee members: (Robin, Susan & Kim)

### **Farm to Institution**

#### Food Service Providers Outreach

- Made calls, but is still missing some data about how they procure and source produce

#### Food Distribution Co-op Research

- We will be convening famers around the Co-op in Mid-December
- Jack Olsen is meeting with the USDA Grant Gatekeeper

#### **November Agenda** (potential topics)

- Green Jobs – Farmworker/TANF stimulus presentation and dialogue
- December 15<sup>th</sup> Aspiring Farmer Access to Capital Workshop & Mixer Event
- Continue dialogue on existing new member nominations
- Ag Innovations Network Alliance 2010 Design Proposal
- San Mateo FSA 2009 Successes

***Follow up:** Issue of the disincentives for farmers to work on water conservation due to food safety issues.*

#### **Meeting logistics**

November 24, 2009, Redwood Shores Branch Library in Redwood City, Room A

*No December Meeting*

January 26, 2010