

Solano Community Food Centers Project

In September, 2017, Sustainable Solano was awarded a 15-month Local Food Promotion Program (LFPP) planning grant by the United States Department of Agriculture. The LFPP offers grant funds with a 25% match to support the development and expansion of local and regional food business enterprises to increase domestic consumption of, and access to, locally and regionally produced agricultural products, and to develop new market opportunities for farm and ranch operations serving local markets. A summary of Sustainable Solano's project is as follows:

Executive Summary

With its partners, Sustainable Solano will conduct a feasibility study, develop a business plan and outline implementation for Solano Community Food Centers: small-scale, consumer-driven food businesses, sourced by local farmers, in each of Solano County's seven cities. Food Centers will be drop-off and pick-up locations for local food, include a licensed kitchen for the creation of ready-to-eat meals, and host educational programs. Previous studies on Solano County concluded that effective local food system development lies not in one large, stand-alone hub, but by collaborating with existing supply chain stakeholders and infrastructure. This planning project will engage stakeholders and partners in examining how several community-based centers can serve the local food supply chain by: identifying effective locations, expanding sales outlets for farmers/ranchers (including CSAs), streamlining transportation/distribution, creating food processing jobs, meeting local demand for raw and value-added products, and educating the public on the value of local food. Expected outcomes are: 1) an economically-sustainable business plan, 2) key partners and resources identified and in place for successful implementation and 3) a viable model for increasing access to and consumption of locally produced agricultural products within Solano County. The long-term goals are a sustainable local food economy and healthy communities.

Work Plan

The management of the grant is divided up into three main stages:

- 1) Initiate Feasibility Study (Oct. 2017 – Feb. 2018)
- 2) Finalize Feasibility Study and Initiate Business Plan (Mar. – Jul. 2018)
- 3) Finalize Business Plan and Outline Implementation Plan (Aug. – Dec. 2018)

To accomplish the objectives within each stage, Sustainable Solano is drawing upon its community resources and the expertise of an Advisory Board (see below), who will also address the larger vision of a sustainable food system within Solano County. The Advisory Board meets four times over the course of the grant, to review milestones and plan for the next phase.

Advisory Board

David Campbell, Associate Dean, Social and Human Sciences, UC Davis

Robin Cox, Sr. Health Services Manager, Solano Public Health

Gail Feenstra, Deputy Director SAREP, UC Davis

Simone Hardy, Agricultural Commissioner, Solano County

Sarah Hawkins, Solano County Farmbudsman

Mike Ioakimedes, Business Development Manager, Solano County Fair Association

Kristin Kiesel, Lecturer PSOE, Agricultural & Resource Economics Dept., UC Davis

Wendy Loomas, Health Services Manager, Solano Public Health

Ben Lyons, Farmer, Lockewood Acres

Denise Lyons, Farmer, Lockewood Acres + Criminalist Supervisor, Solano County DA

Jahniah McGill, Environmental Health Supervisor, Solano County

Greg Morrison, Board Member, Cultivate Community Food Co-Op

Stann Whipple, Treasurer, Board of Directors, Sustainable Solano

Documents/Resources

Solano Community Food Centers Announcement

About the USDA LFPP Grant <https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/lfpp>

Communication Documents

- Current State of Solano County's Food System [Coming March, 2018!]
- Vision for Solano County's Food System [Coming December, 2018!]

Funding

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