

## Piedmont Triad Regional Food Council Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 28, 2023

1-2:30PM || Zoom

**Attendees:** (s) technical support staff; (v) visitor

Jennifer Bedrosian (s), Jose Colon (s), Kana Miller, Rachel Zimmer, David Allen, LaShauna Austria, Courtney Alston Wilson, Eunice Calderon, Sophie Farlow, Ariana Ayuso (v), Salem Neff (v), Hetal Patel (v), Gary Williams, Savannah Moore, Daniel Johnson, Sheneka Fosey

**1:00PM Check in Question:** LaShauna asked what's one new and interesting thing you've been thinking about lately?

**1:05PM Guest Presenter:** Kana Miller introduced the guest speakers for today from Cobblestone Farmers Market in Winston-Salem and the North Carolina Farmers Market Network, Salem Neff and Ariana Ayuso- to talk about SNAP Double Bucks and Triad Farmers Markets.

- Salem asked how many people on the call are involved in farmers markets? She's a board member of the newly established North Carolina Farmers Market Network. This network began in the beginning of the pandemic as a way to share information and resources on how to operate markets during the pandemic. The group is made of mostly market managers, but also state representatives, food council reps, and local officials. The resource has been great, and it has blossomed into a non-profit. One of the issues that came up SNAP and Double Bucks. Several surrounding states has Double Bucks as line item in state budget and/or sustainable funding statewide- we'd like that to happen in NC eventually.
- Several regions in NC either have support or are putting in applications to support county-wide and/or regional support of Double Bucks. The Triad does not currently have regional support for markets. We want to see if there is interest with other markets to drive regional support and to invite folks to our monthly meetings.  
→**If you want to join the list: [hcdankba@ncsu.edu](mailto:hcdankba@ncsu.edu) will add you to that call list if you would like to participate!**
- Ariana Ayuso provided background on SNAP at Cobblestone FM. They have accepted SNAP/EBT in their markets since beginning, 12 years ago. The money coming in from SNAP/EBT has gone up yearly. Ex: In 2020, market went from \$6500 to \$22000 dollars from SNAP AND EBT. Last year, the amount was \$32000. Match dollars are very important for us, but also for families that need the support. Ariana asked for sustainable sponsorship and to voice support for statewide and national funding. Ariana asked if there are any questions about the program. WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) AND Senior FMNP, vouchers are also funding that has been used in markets and has been matched, as well.
- Jennifer Bedrosian asked: Who is supporting SNAP in other regions? Western NC is submitting a new application for Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program to support SNAP. Duke Health is sponsoring 15 markets in Triangle for SNAP Double Bucks. WellCare sponsored Cartaret County.
- Kana Miller- Question from Rachel – Do you have some existing partners for this collaborative, if so, who?

- Salem stated that she's been talking to other markets in Forsyth County. Right now Cobblestone Market is the main market pushing Double Bucks, but we are looking for more partners and regional support.
  - Ariana stated that the health department has been a great supporter, as well as Senior Services, who inform the public about these resources.
- Kana shared additional context around conversation to get funding in state budget. Jaylen Cates, CFSA Policy Director, has previously advised if we were able to get statewide support for GusNIP, the numbers and impact are going to be needed. Salem- through the network we've been working on a statewide census and SNAP number to get a better sense of what is used in markets.
- Rachel Zimmer- asked. I know that there is a certain demographic that the Cobblestone market primarily serves. Rachel is also a healthcare provider and knows that transportation can be an issue. Are other markets that are more centrally located involved to reach more people? Have you all thought about that? Follow up- what outcomes are you wanting- what is success for you?
- Ariana- Transportation barriers is a huge issue for people with folks with government support. A Pilot Mobile Market was started with Granville Farms and HOPE W-S- but funding is needed to continue. We have reached out to other markets and have written them into grants. I think it's a great idea to collaborate because folks need easy access. Success to me means breaking down transportation barriers, more dollars being used at markets, and the hopes of providing more funding to get more dollars to folks.
- Gary Williams- Forsyth County- SHARE Harvest Market is interested in partnering. Applications have been sent to USDA for some funding, but none has been awarded. This year, they want to refocus the ask specifically for Double Bucks funding. At the Harvest Market we take EBT benefits. If anybody is interested in teaming with us, please reach out. We have existing infrastructure and have past applications. Also, we have van and delivery is also available at the Harvest Market. Gary also stated we have a Spanish speaking individual (bilingual) that can assist and help with coordination and being more inclusive.
- Salem looks forward to connecting with Gary to collaborate. Rachel also suggested getting connected with the Bulb in Charlotte, who is doing similar work. Salem will check to see if there has been a connection with them.

### **1:30PM Opportunities & Updates**

- Jennifer shared that social media posts are going well. Subcommittee is starting interviews. Please add to the list of suggestions. If anyone else is interested in doing an interview, please reach out.
- Triad Food Symposium. Jennifer has been reaching out to contacts who want to get involved. Two days are reserved this fall at NCA&T: Tuesday, September 19 and September 26. We'll need to choose one soon. Jennifer will be meeting with the Greater High Point Food Alliance this week- they are working on an event, with focus on local food. Can we partner? Will keep this group updated.
- Forsyth FoodChats- Moved meetings to quarterly. Last month, the went to co-op extension to meet new staff. The next one is June 7<sup>th</sup>, 10 am. Tour of Second Harvest Food Bank. If you are interested in joining, regardless if you live in Forsyth County, contact me for more information.

## 1:40 PM Council Member Updates

What is going on in your county? Success stories?

- Kana shouted out Rachel Zimmer for being a panelist at the symposium. Wake Forest University hosted: The [Of Hearth and Table Symposium: Culture, Cultivation, Cooking and Food Access in Black Communities](#) – it was so good, about black food and culture and systems of access!

Updates-

- LaShauna Austria shared Alamance Food Collaborative is no longer associated with Healthy Alamance – Cone Health. Healthy Alamance is not existing anymore. We decided to continue our efforts without the backing. We have a strong connection with Elon University. Event on April 15, book signing, with The Mocha Gardener, *How to Become a Gardner*. Elon University is also partnering with my farm- 15 students are working at the farm Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. Hoping to get more acquainted with policy work. LaShauna will send event information.
- Rachel Zimmer- partnered with Gary Williams and SHARE, sent patients that need food access. Also, the Research study is up and running, enrolled 50 people. 75 to go. Researching mood, hospitalizations, fruit and veg intake, food insecurity and biometric data over time. Qualitative work will also be done.
- Gary Williams with SHARE Cooperative in Winston-Salem, opened doors of the store and operating about 14 weeks. Focus has been on marketing to get more folks in the door. Wide variety of groceries, fruits and veg. Finally opened the deli, between 11am-2pm each day. All are invited to come out!
- Daniel Johnson- Piedmont Triad Farmers Market in Colfax working hard to get things up and running this year- up to 157 vendors and expect to double that. Excited to be a new member of this food council! Looking forward to developing connections and supporting others. Has space for non-profit orgs to promote your work- reach out. Working on a pollination celebration on Father's Day this year with mead and mini-festival.
- David Allen wants to thank Sophie Farlow as full-time Ag agent with Cooperative Extension in Randolph County. Funding stream was changed from ARPA funds to more permanent funding to fill the need.
- Sophie Farlow in Randolph County- excited and here to stay and happy to be new council member!
- Eunice Calderón, Davidson County Local Food Network and WellCare- 1) The Davidson County Local Food Council online food hub is up and running for pick-up in Thomasville or Lexington. Orders total 299 and total revenue is \$11,574 so far. Looking at date for Farm Tour weekend-sometime in June.
- Hetal Patel- no updates. Wanted to introduce herself, works with MDC/Rural Forward and Community Food Strategies Team. Waiting for approval from her supervisor to become a food council member for Guilford County. A lot of work is focused on health equity and food systems, has worked in southeast for 3 years now.

- Sheneka Foskey, no updates. She is Community Care Program Manager for Brito Nutrition Program at Med Center for women at Cone Health. Have market in the building so patients in need can shop. Have been running off of donations, serving about 200 patients a month.
- Kana Miller wanted to share an upcoming USDA grant writing assistance webinar on April 3<sup>rd</sup> offered from Dr. Kathleen Liang at NCA&T. Info was sent out on listserv. Is anyone on this council applying? Can we support?
  - Gary Williams, SHARE, and Rachel Zimmer are applying for GusNIP- may partner. Gary will reach out for council letter of support.
  - Davidson County Local Food is looking at USDA opportunities as well.
- Savannah Moore, Stokes County. Working on food safety trainings and getting ready for farmers market. Offering a training for vendors in the next few weeks. Also food preservation classes upcoming.

**2:00 PM** February Minutes Approved

**2:15PM** Adjourn

Next meeting April 25<sup>th</sup> in person at PTRC. Lunch at 12pm. Meeting at 1pm.

Kana will send info for April meeting on food advocacy and ways folks can easily plug-in across the state.