



2018

FOOD SUMMIT

Cook County Department of Public Health



2018 Food Summit: Summary Report and Recommendations

The Cook County Department of Public Health, Cook County Health, and Loyola University Chicago, Health Sciences Division held the 2018 Food Summit on October 5-6, 2018 at Loyola University Chicago in Maywood, Illinois.

The 2018 Food Summit focused on how to make good food widely available and affordable, and shared a new vision for food system transformation. Participants learned about investments and policy opportunities that advance equitable, healthy, and sustainable local and regional food systems. The Summit emphasized the Good Food Purchasing Policy (GFPP) adopted in May 2018 by Cook County government, and engaged participants in facilitated discussions.

“The GFPP recognizes the important role that government plays in transforming our local food system and increasing access to healthy foods for all.”

GFPP is a metric-based procurement framework that supports institutional food buyers to make informed decisions and measure impact in five value categories: local economies, environmental sustainability, valued workforce, animal welfare and nutrition. Eventually, vendors will need to meet established benchmarks to be eligible to supply food to Cook County government sites. Working to meet these standards goes hand-in-hand with making Cook County a healthier place and ensuring every resident has the opportunity to thrive.



Summit Overview

The Summit was held over two days. Welcome addresses were given by Drs. Margaret Faut Callahan of Loyola University Chicago and John Jay Shannon of Cook County Health on day one and former Cook County Commissioner Jesús García on day two. Below summarizes attendance; the keynote presentations; and panel discussions.

Who was in attendance

There was 145 people in attendance, with 130 people on day one and 79 on day two. A total of 77 organizations across various sectors were represented, including academia, agriculture, community development, faith, environment, foundations, health, labor, and schools.

Keynote Presentations

Dr. Terry Mason of the Cook County Department of Public Health kicked off the Summit by creating a sense of urgency, emphasizing the reasons action must be taken now to transform the food system to make locally-sourced, nutritious “good foods” affordable and widely available for everyone; and highlighting the value of the Good Food Purchasing Policy (GFPP) in this endeavor. Suzanne Adely of Food Chain Workers Alliance then discussed, “Justice in the Food Chain: The Power of Grassroots Organizing.” In her keynote, Suzanne shared how the Food Chain Workers Alliance came to be, the vital importance of worker’s rights, and how the GFPP is an exciting multi-sector, grassroots initiative that is part of a broader vision to make food systems more equitable, healthy and sustainable. These two keynote presentations set the stage for Rodger Cooley from the Chicago Food Policy Action Council and Allison Polke from Chicago Public Schools (CPS) on day two of the Summit to share more details about the GFPP; the benefits of adopting this framework; key stakeholders necessary for implementation; and successes and lessons learned from CPS’ implementation of the GFPP.

Panel Discussions

Two panel discussions were held on the first day of the Summit. Vickie Lakes-Battle of IFF moderated the panel focused on local and regional food system investments with panel members representing Advocates for Urban Agriculture, City of Chicago – Department of Planning and Development, FamilyFarmed, United States Department of Agriculture, and University of Illinois Extension. The panel of experts highlighted investments their organizations are making to build local and regional food systems that support healthy food access, economic growth, a productive workforce and equity, and shared reasons to be optimistic about the future. This panel was followed by one moderated by Rep. Sonya Harper with panel members representing Centro de Trabajadores Unidos, Greater Chicago Food Depository, Illinois Environmental Council, Illinois Stewardship Alliance, and local government. This panel of experts discussed policy opportunities and alignment across the health, environment, agriculture, and labor sectors to build local and regional food systems that promote health, sustainability and food justice.

Please visit the CCDPH website at www.cookcountypublichealth.org for more information about the Food Summit. Presentations and panel discussions from the 2018 Food Summit should be available for viewing Spring 2019.



2018

FOOD SUMMIT

Cook County Department of Public Health

- 01 Implementation of GFPP is monitored, enforced and evaluated
- 02 Expansion of GFPP and investments in lower resourced communities
- 03 Just local economies with living wage for all workers in food supply chain
- 04 Support for small- to mid-sized operations to benefit from GFPP
- 05 Public-private partnerships established
- 06 Collaborative planning, aggregation and distribution
- 07 Green “environmental” impact for Cook County
- 08 Animals w/o hormones & less antibiotic resistant diseases in humans
- 09 Community at center of decision-making process in food system
- 10 Culturally appropriate consumer education & increase in local demand
- 11 Improved health outcomes and reduced healthcare costs
- 12 Generational impact with future generations having access to quality foods

Facilitated Discussions

Facilitated discussions were held on the second day of the Summit. The purpose of these discussions were to cultivate a vision for change if the GFPP is implemented effectively, and provide an opportunity to find out how participants want to continue to be engaged. Twelve key points were raised through the discussion, which are described below and summarized to the left.

Vision for Change When GFPP is Implemented

- Implementation of GFPP is monitored, enforced and evaluated.
 - Different groups are trying to institute accountability and effectiveness.
 - How about penalties for not meeting GFPP standards?
- GFPP is expanded to other entities like healthcare systems and school districts/schools, and investments are made in lower resourced communities.
- Local economies are just.
 - Current power structure will be dismantled and revamped.
 - Living wage for all workers in the food supply chain.
 - Individual self-worth and quality of life will be enhanced.
 - More local food system-based job opportunities through the community are established.
- There is support for small- to mid-sized operations in benefitting from GFPP.
 - More farmers will be included and engaged.
 - Technical assistance is needed.
 - Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and organic certification are expensive. Rural and urban farmers need help to become a vendor.
 - Vast majority of farmers are families, which limits their ability to attract capital. Establishing as a LISC or other entity can help with this.
 - Participation in GFPP provides consistent revenue.
- Public-private partnerships are established (e.g., The Hatchery).
- Collaborative planning, aggregation, and distribution occurs to support local producers.
 - Food hub / public-sponsored food hub
 - Shared infrastructure (facilities, finance, planning)
 - More access to capital and public infrastructure

Vision for Change When GFPP is Implemented (continued)

- Implementation leads to a green “environmental” impact for Cook County.
 - Protection of farmland and our natural forest preserves.
 - Food waste will be reduced, and capitalized upon.
 - Land use regulations and restrictions will be established.
 - Locally, seasonal foods produced foods are procured.
- Animals are raised without hormones; “meatless” meals are increased; and incidence of antibiotic resistant diseases in humans are reduced.
- Community will be empowered to be at the center of the decision-making process in the food system.
 - There is a need for community ownership/control.
 - Grassroots voices will drive the transformation.
- There will be culturally appropriate education of consumers, and an increase in local demand.
 - Marketing and education to help people understand the GFPP.
 - Educational sessions or courses (e.g., how to buy healthy food at affordable prices), and cooking classes will be offered.
 - Reconnect consumers with food, and change how people eat and live.
- There will be improved health outcomes and reduced healthcare costs.
- The impact will be generational. “Future generations have access to quality foods and life-long habits.”

Actions for Considerations

- Good data and research is needed.
 - As examples, Detroit loses \$178 million annual to non-Detroit grocery stores; or 85% of discretionary income in Austin is spent in Oak Park.
 - Investments should be made for research around sustainable environmental practices, instead of dollars being invested in pesticides and the like.
- There are opportunities for key stakeholders to be engaged. Identify who is already doing this work.
- Power mapping could be used. Power mapping is a visual tool that identifies the best individuals to target to promote social change.

Issues / Concerns / Questions

- Where can affordable healthy food be bought?
- How does or will GFPP impact how people get [good] food where they live?
- How can local demand be increased?
- Business viability/sustainability?
- Resources for small/mid-sized rural farmers?
- How can media be engaged to devote resources to this cause?

Ways to Continue to Engage Participants

- Provide list of names and organizations and contact information before or after the Summit. Set up email list serve.
- Schedule meet-ups to discuss ideas and concerns and to hold cooking demonstrations.
- Create on-line resource directory with resources and networks in the community; offer in different languages.
- Communicate, including progress reports, between Food Summits.

Evaluation Results

A total of 41 participants completed the survey. Of the participants who responded, 25% attended Friday only; 7% Saturday only; and 68% both days. While participants represented various sectors (11% - Agriculture; 11% - Environment; 8% Labor; 5% Public/Consumer; and 11% - Other), over half of the respondents represented the health sector.

Benefits of attending the Food Summit

- 94% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the Summit helped them to better understand the details about the Good Food Purchasing Program (GFPP).
- 81% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the Summit allowed participants to share their vision or what they hope will change if the GFPP is implemented effectively.
- 87% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed the Summit provided valuable networking opportunities.

What respondents liked most

One respondent shared liking the strategic direction of the Summit, “taking [the event] from the importance of a healthy diet to assuring healthy, equity and sustainable food systems.” As this event has shifted topically, the organization of the event evolved too. Respondents most liked the following parts of the 2018 Food Summit.

- Urban farms tour
- Panel sessions
- Facilitated, small group discussions

What respondents recommended for future Food Summits

Top responses included the following.

- Additional speakers and engagement from other sectors
- More time for Q&A
- Development of concrete plan
- Follow up on actions

Respondents also reiterated keeping the urban farms tour and expanding opportunities for interaction/structure, small group discussions and networking. They further suggested holding the Summit on one day; bringing back information about a plant-based nutrition; promoting use of reusable water bottles and reducing waste; and building something for young professionals or people who want to get involved.

Next Steps

In 2019, Cook County Department of Public Health with support from the Chicago Food Policy Action Council will:

- Release 2018 Food Summit videos for viewing.
- Launch Cook County Task Force, comprised of relevant Cook County government entities and key stakeholders.
- Begin to conduct the baseline assessment of Cook County government agencies who procure food and beverages.
- Provide an update to Cook County Commissioners and key stakeholders.
- Hold the 4th Annual Food Summit in September/October 2019.