

MEETING MINUTES:

Teton Food and Farm Coalition Meeting

Wednesday, March 22, 2023

9-10 am Zoom meeting facilitated by UI Extension Office, Driggs, ID

1. Welcome & Introductions

Attendance: Sue Heffron, Teton Valley Food Pantry; Robert Sgroi, Teton Co, Wy Conservation District; Charlotte Walker, Slow Food in the Tetons; Angela Saggiomo, Teton Valley Community Recycling; Iris Saxer, TVCR; Hayes Swinney, Mountain Roots Education; Tammy Sachse & Jen Werlin (UI Extension, Teton County office), Andrea Swedberg (Community Resource Center of Teton Valley).

2. New Business: discussion about food security, food waste, recovery, and Grow-a-Row programming in Teton Valley:

Partner Updates:

Sue (TVFP): They've seen an increase in clients coming to the pantry (600+ households per month) → It was 400 a year ago. They're not getting as much food from the state because of supply chain issues; get food from Idaho food bank 1x/mo. They also purchase food from Nicholas & Co and locally from Broulims. They created a task force to help address the food supply issues/increase demand. There is the Emergency Food Assistance Program (EFAP) for low-income earners (\$2800 or less/mo for single, \$5800 or less for family of 4). TVFP made their qualifications so that everyone qualifies for assistance by income so they can get food regardless of if they qualify for the EFAP program. Individuals can come to the pantry 1x/week versus other pantries that usually limit coming 1x/mo. In terms of local food / CSA shares, Cosmic Apple and Snowdrift provide extra produce, they also receive donations from "grow-a-row" participants such as UI Extension/4-H.

Other: SNAP benefits are being drastically reduced with the subsidies going away that were implemented during the pandemic (FYI-many Teton county residents don't qualify b/c they make too much money, but our high cost of living skews the data).

Community Resource center: A little slower right now, lots of baked goods, there's a 2-hr distribution time, but they usually run out in about an hour; operate M-Sat., 2/day, 1x on Saturday. At Broulims, it is first come, first serve. Volunteer times are after staff can go through produce (e.g., 9-10am, 2-3pm). Distribution: M, T, Th, F 10-2 and W 11-7pm

Angela with TVCR reported about their compost education programs and their efforts to reduce food waste. They have a lot of compost bins. They're working with MD Nursery and their new sustainability officer (new position) and would like to hold workshops at the nursery. Jonah Sloven from Sweet Hallow Farms is also collecting compost. TVCR is working with RAD waste disposal and Idaho DEQ on compliance issues. The discussion turned to examples in Jackson, WY and what they are doing with residential food waste being sent to the recycling center working with Dayne Buke (?) of Backyard Bins.

Iris also with TVCR reported about the Jackson's USDA Grant opportunity for equipment. There are early adopters from businesses, one school and some residents. Not many residents are participating in

this voluntary program because they don't want to pay for the extra service. It is \$5 per bucket for drop off.

The discussion then moved to Teton Valley about Highpoint Cider working with Sweet Hallow farm. Getting enough carbon materials for composting seems to be an issue (yard waste, etc). Teton County, ID also doesn't own a woodchipper. TVCR is trying to get grant funds for one. TVCR also worked with the county to get firewood salvage at the transfer station (i.e., salvage Fridays \$10).

Rob Sgroi with the Teton Co Soil Conservation District in WY reported that compost waste needs to be very clean, without stickers, etc. They are also looking into wildfire risk reduction to maybe help meet the need, tree service companies, construction, etc.

Teton County, ID transfer station is successfully composting animal waste on site. This is unavailable to the public for landscaping due to safety issues with chronic wasting disease but helps reduce landfill waste.

Mountain Roots reported about their summer garden program at schools. They're hoping to bring food to the food pantry, will maybe sell at a children's farm stand.

Charlotte walker with Slow Food in the Tetons reported on their local food discount program. They started a pilot project in 2022 with funding from the Hughes Charitable Foundation \$50k) to give community members a sliding scale discount on food bought at their farm stand (and People's market?; online farmers market 4x/winter). Customers plug in a code to get a discount on their products. Slow food may set guidelines and qualifications in the future. FYI- Hughes Charitable Foundation is very Wyoming oriented.

Last, it was mentioned that International Compost Awareness week is May 7-13th. Jen mentioned she could maybe plan a chat with organizations who may be interested in collaborating...

3. Adjourn at 10 am

Next meeting scheduled: Wed., April 26 at 12pm via Zoom.