

MEETING MINUTES:

Teton Food and Farm Coalition Meeting

Wednesday, November 29, 2023

12-1:15pm MT Zoom meeting facilitated by UI Extension Teton County Office, Driggs, ID

Attendance: Jen Werlin, UI Extension Teton County; Tammy Sachse, UI Extension, Teton County; Katie Baker, FARE Idaho; Hayes Swinney, Mountain Roots Education

1. 12pm – Welcome & brief Introductions
2. Roundtable Updates: Upcoming winter programs and organizational updates
 - a. **Passed on from Andrea Swedberg: Food for Good:** continues to seek local food donor sources to help fill the gap for families not able to access our previously available rescued food, now being distributed at the food pantry, as a result of the October exclusive partnership between the food pantry and Broulim's.
 - b. **From Iris Saxer, TVCR county liaison:** they are doing any work on eliminating single use packaging with their collaborators. I don't really see that in their webpage as an area of focus, but obviously is very important to TVCR. We are hoping to launch our new BYO Container campaign, but sadly Idaho Food Code is very restrictive, and it is actually a violation to bring your own container to fill at bulk bins or to bring your own Tupperware to a restaurant for leftovers. Obviously, it can fly under the radar as an individual choice, but especially now that I have the EIPH and the Idaho DH&W watching us, I need to proceed with caution - sadly that means we'll just focus on reusable cups and reusable grocery bags. I need to explore with IDHW if you can bring your own produce bags or not.

Sounds like IDHW just redid food code items for cottage industries - and they agreed that the BYO stuff we are trying to do here really should be legal, but that is going to require legislative change.
 - c. Extension updates: Annie's project and master gardener programs starting in January and February.
 - d. Mountain Roots: wreath making Dec 2, sprouts workshop Feb 1
 - i. Grant funding for gardens in Driggs and Victor
3. New Business:
 - a. Guest Speaker: Katie Baker, FARE Idaho
 - b. Upcoming Agenda Items

Katie Baker: FARE Idaho

Worked for Idaho's Bounty food cooperative for 8 years. She started FARE Idaho in the pandemic as a 501c36. First was restaurant, food truck and bar focused. She also was a part of Edible Idaho. The publishers closed the magazine but the stories section of FARE Idaho ("Project FARE") is separate and now a subset of the organization.

About FARE Idaho:

- Nonprofit trade association around the local food system.
- Independent grocers, bars and restaurants, advocate on behalf of their members.

- Unite around shared interests.

Restaurant revitalization fund: millions of dollars to help food and beverage.

Focus on livestock processing: hosted several Zoom meetings because ranchers couldn't get processing dates.

They are also working on farmland preservation and conservation easements.

Liquor licensing changes happened in March 2023. They are helping restaurants and bars since it impacts them greatly and has negatively impacted some restaurants.

FARE Idaho also participated in Regenerate America: national ag marketing summit. They attended a screening of Common Ground movie, as well.

They are working on membership benefits such as music licensing discounts, healthcare and mental health services and have negotiated lower rates with Blue Cross of Idaho.

The discussion then led to the Northwest and Rocky Mountain Business center grant (\$3 million for state of Idaho): Katie is a part of the meat theme team, Jen Werlin is part of the Food business theme team, and Colette Dephelps (UI extension) is leading the climate resilience theme team.

FARE also received a local food promotion grant. As part of this, they led classes about learning the art of butchery: traveled to Boise, Caldwell, Moscow, and Ketchum. Filmed classes and posted them to YouTube. Videos also educate consumers about problems in processing; highlight local producers. They hosted Zoom roundtables and included state inspection. The workforce is an issue. State inspection programs had no work force to run facilities in other states (e.g., Montana).

Katie asked Dean Parella at Univ. of Idaho for a technical certificate program. May have launched an 18 mo program recently.

They also receive a USDA farmers market promotion program. They are also working on connecting producers and buyers. Field-to-Fork event will be 9am on January 18th in Boise (Chef lead classes, lots of booths). Grant can help provide marketing resources for small producers. 20 producers-, 5 farmers market.

They publish a newsletter every two weeks: provide advocacy updates and have a 43% open rate.

Unite and Their Why: How to craft legislation that has great voices that helps everyone. Working together.

Local Teton Valley members of FARE Idaho include Highpoint Cider and Butter Café.

At the end of the meeting, the discussion led to how to get more engagement in the Teton food and Farm Coalition. It would have been helpful to have the meat processing stakeholders attend this meeting. Will try personal invites for future meetings.

4. Adjourned at 1:15pm

Next meeting: January 24, 2024 from 12-1pm MT. Registration and agenda info coming soon.