

## PCFFC North Pitt High School Forum

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What is a Food Council? And how can I get involved

### Open and Introduction

- Dr. Morrow opened up the group...you are what you eat? Studied nutrition before he went into medicine... Not Just an old adage.
- Every system in body is dependent on the food that you eat, constantly replacing cells in body. Our body is not the same as when we were younger.
- All replaced by the food that we eat. Important as it sustains life.
- Food is cultural and societal: what we do in life, in families, part of religious culture.
- Food is medicine-cures us and heals us. Just like medicine you can have wrong food.
- 73% of adults in Pitt overweight or obesity...now in children with obesity related chronic diseases
- Food is a System. Making sure people have right food...access to healthy foods, and huge part of our economy. If economy isn't healthy, people aren't healthy.
- Here to listen to people of Pitt County: How do you think that we can make the Pitt County food system a healthier food system for everyone?

### Roll Call:

Gideon Adams (Food Bank Raleigh)

Taylor Davis (Pitt County Cooperative Extension Intern)

Lemuel Tant (community)

Susan Houston (nurse)

Brittany Hender (community)

Tawanda (ECU Social Work, PC Aging),

Jennifer James (Principal, farm family)

Gloristine Brown (Mayor of Bethel)

Rod Debs (Greenville Unitarian Universalist Fellowship)

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Mary Perkins Williams (Pitt County Commissioner)

Kay Craven (ECU Clinical Nutrition)

Julie Morrow (St. Vincent DePaul, St. Peter Food Pantry)

Task Force:

Crystal Andrews (Food Bank)

Alison Swart (Pitt County Health Department)

Robin Tant (Pitt County Health Department)

Maxine White (Coalition Healthy Eating, community)

Jessica Stokes (NC Churches)

Alice Keene (Pitt County Planning)

James Rhodes (Pitt County Planning)

Joni Torres (Community Garden Coordinator)

Eric Derstine (Cooperative Extension)

Doris (Coordinator PCFFC)

### **Leigh Presentation (Video Attached)**

- Food System Demonstration. Food Council is set up to increase communication between each portion of the food system.
- Task force created to connect people in the food system
- NC is 10-13th in agriculture receipts (amount of money generated from AG), but 25.3% of children are struggling from hunger. Counterintuitive
- Food Council isn't all about hunger, but it's about increasing likelihood people will stay in farming, and even creating policy. Broader than poverty and hunger, but encompasses it.

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- When you think about food policy: Oakland put a fruit and vegetable truck in street...but it's not that simple. Made policies so that fresh fruits and vegetables could be sold in similar locations ice cream would be.
- At a Little League concession stand what food would be available?
- Group Answers: Junk, chips, etc...But if we had yogurt and fruits would the children choose that? Group Answer: Yes

What have we done so far?

- We have worked for 2 years. Officially sanctioned by the board of county commissioners as an official group
- Brown Bag Luncheon
- Working with Consultant Jared
- Food Assessment to figure out the relationship that Pitt County has with food. Our Values encompass (healthy people, vibrant farms, strong communities, sustainable ecosystems, thriving local economies, justice and fairness)
- Rod (pastor) has hosted a series with AMEXCAN, focusing on justice for food workers. Looking at a family, their living conditions, difficulty in life, someone working at the base of our food system doesn't always have the money to buy the food they need.
- Migrant Labor may come into Pitt County for strawberries, but our weather is unpredictable, what if they have a 2 week delay? How do they pay for food and housing? What do their kids do?
- Sometimes food councils only choose 1 or 2 segments to work on
- Briefing of Food System quick facts (people were nodding their heads based on the facts, Mayor and Principal very engaged on younger generations of farmers and the need)
- Mission and Vision Statement
- Task force will absolve and become a: Coordinating group-interacted by 4 action circles: (Farming and Economic Development, Food Security, and 2 unnamed action circles determined by forums)

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- Story from Farmville Forum: Day Care worker, dilemma that families have to debate between buying food and pay for every day needs. "I change their diapers...I know what comes out of them!" Stunning news.

**Public Input-Two questions: What is the most important food issue in your community? And, who needs to be at our next farm and food meeting?**

**Question 1:**

- Education: (Jennifer James, Principal): Watching a lot of documentaries about you are what you eat. How it impacts disease. Education will make better choices
- Food Literacy (Gideon Adams, Raleigh Food Bank) concept of educating people on understanding food and what to do with food. How to prepare food also.
- Fast food more prevalent (Intern, college age) accessible, easy, fast, out number, popular area of towns. Surrounded by unhealthy things (temptation) over saturation
- Reaching out to my community (Mayor Brown) in the community, watching younger mothers and parents, a lot of them you hear them say, *"It's easier to go through the drive through."* They call it "Good Food" (the healthy food that they don't know how to cook it) need to get the older generation to mentor younger folks on how to take care of food. Observation (school food is not good, and also may not be able to eat). (Jennifer James, Principal) agreeing, hungry children act out more in class. School system is wasting food. ---School nutrition (Leigh) is a budget center on its own. School nutrition has to make its budget, so if I have to pay for stuff, the only way to do is to sell cookies on side (must be smart snack approved). Jennifer James also shared that the parents also pack very unhealthy foods.
- Coordination of existing services (Julie Morrow) coming from a food insecurity standpoint. Example: One church has it on one day each week, but why do they have to go to three different places. (Crystal) coordinating is good, but the collaboration for emerging food systems, is what is lacking. Share concerns, communication, to avoid double dipping.
- Kay Craven- (access to healthy foods and linking those to access) many of her patients can get to doctor but can't get to grocery stores, had a pregnant women come in, gave health ideas, and woman said she wasn't likely to follow the food council. Has food stamps, doesn't use all her WIC, buying popcorn, chips, ramen noodles, Kool-Aid, has 3 kids and pregnant. The reason she ate the things she did is because they were light. Her three kids had to help her carry them in the bag. She

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saved her WIC, so she could pay people transport with the extra. Gave her a rolling bag wheel cart.

- Jessica; good intentions but we give poorly made and very unhealthy food, makes sense in the way of budgets, must look at the theology of helping others and healthy food. Education, teaching that saving money right now will equal more doctor's bills in the future.
- Susan: Fresh fruit and veggies, sparked by the dollar general and dollar stores, \*Leigh Asked James if planning dictates what will go into a place or sold there? Pastor Rod asked: are there any rewards? James: if health department made policy, but we are not a progressive system with incentives like California....Citizens can get together and dictate, if you're not willing to provide then we will not buy from you. James: we are market driven, ENC, the market is currently there. Allison: Grants around corner stores, people may be willing to participate, business and livelihoods, but must take a leap however very uncertain (CPPPW Grant). AHA through corner stores provide grants that give equipment.
- Susan: local gardens able to give and share, community where you can open our Piggly Wiggly parking lot to share. Family in Quadra Island, they hold a fresh bread sharing with donations. Joni: Mini Urban garden, sell like a local CSA
- Pastor Rod-Practical alternative for healthier food, how do we get them to eat healthier)
- Knowledge and Access to healthy choices (Brittany) Showing people how to cook with vegetables...food lion ran out of parsnips because people weren't buying them. Doesn't want to go to Greenville
- Even if food is accessible how do people get to it? (College student, social work) Education regarding unhealthy food. Born and raised in Africa, diet consisted of organic food. Brothers didn't want to eat her healthy food she cooks. Joni: Should train kids to get their taste buds acclimated or early exposure to healthy food.
- Food Access and affordability, access to healthy foods and linking those to access to those without, Access to health, Fresh Food and Veggies, Local garden
- Educating Healthy Eating, Food Literacy, Reaching out to community, How to prepare, Offering dignity through food, education, the impact of food and chronic disease prevention, Food Choices
- Access to healthy food, over saturation of fast food

A. Food Literacy

B. Access to Healthy Foods

C. Collaboration/Network

Any thoughts:

*Joni: Any thoughts about how to help? How can we bring everyone together, fighting in droves against any changes or helps?*

Mayor: Hoping that with Maxine bringing in food hub-very beneficial, educational component, to show the community, this is what you can do, having to decide how to get to (dollar general) or where to go.

Derrick: *Which of these would be primarily more difficult north of the river compared to other areas?* Jennifer James, Principal: Access, also the literacy, North Pitt has an agriculture program, education, don't have the avenues, must start at young age, with leadership opportunities. Brittany North of the River it has to start in the schools.

*Doris: Do educators talk about this?* Jennifer Principal: No, because there are so many other things, pressing other things at state and county level

Gideon: *\*statement\* "the number of times that we heard today that decisions by the retailers and fast food are market driven. So if we change people's understanding you create a market. We need to have that multigenerational approach (back to home economics and domestic science), but I agree that we don't need to write off the older generation, we need them to help the younger. First and foremost we need the vast majority to understand healthy foods to create a market. Create market, it creates economy."* Maxine: I agree, but that's why we have a food hub, the lady who has snap EBT can then choose...if food hubs work in conjunction with food councils, then we can eradicate 40% of the problem. Education is key. The food hub will partner with shelters, pick up people with snap EBT take them to homeless shelter, and teach them to cook food from farm. Once those recipients have prepared the food so they can leave it for the people.

Julie Morrow(Transportation/ bus system) accessibility to grocery stores.

Alice Keene Closing:

- Before you leave we want to share with you about some opportunities. Your passion, stories, and experiences were moving.
- Challenges of PCFFC might be, "Where do we start?" What's the highest priority

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- Two ways you can become involved:
  1. Become a part of the food council (Formal application, 3 year term, coordinating overarching council that will drive policy, 13 members appointed by county commissioners)
  2. Action Circles : Farming and economic development, and food security, application, and you can join the action circles at any time, no set commitment for action circles

Thanks to Derrick Boyce for taking notes