

HEALTH LEADERSHIP NETWORK
FOOD SUMMIT WORKGROUP
Friday, February 5, 2010
County Courthouse, Conference Room B

In attendance: Sky Hoyt, Farmer and Educator; Chuck March, Lake county Farm Bureau, Executive Director; Debra Sommerfield, Lake County Administration, Deputy CAO; Shelly Mascari, Marketing Consultant; Susan Jen and Jackie Armstrong, Health Leadership Network.

Susan reported that the Little Theater at the Fairgrounds would be the Food Summit site and that Chic le Chef would be catering lunch comprised of soup and salad made of entirely local produce with whole grain bread bowls baked by the Yuba College culinary arts class. In response to Sky's question if the Big Valley Grange had been considered for the event, Susan responded that the Fairgrounds would probably be easier for most people to find.

Susan also reported that the Iron Chef Cook-off would include both adult and child judges with the children submitting their 1st, 2nd and 3rd choices in writing. In response to Sky's question about dinner, Susan said the chefs would be preparing only tasting samples. Sky, Chuck and Debra agreed that it would be very difficult to keep people after 5 without another meal. Susan explained that she expected that the people attending the day program would not be the same people attending the community program in the evening but could see how the schedule might be confusing. Moving the Cook-off to the middle of the day was one suggestion to shorten the event.

During a review of the program, Chuck reported that he had received calls from several of the larger growers in response to the Save-the-Date press release because the Food Assessment was mentioned in the last paragraph. Comments included questioning why A.G. Kawamura would be participating in an event that represented only 1% of Lake County acreage in production. Susan said that 93% of Lake County's crops are specialty crops and that she hoped the Food Summit would attract large and small specialty crop growers beyond vegetable producers. Chuck said that the continuing connection between the Food Summit and Food Assessment has exacerbated estrangement of the mass market growers. In response to Chuck's comment about the large growers being left out of the Food Assessment, Susan explained that the major export crops were not surveyed because the goal was to identify local markets for local growers interested in selling their crop in Lake County. She apologized that the purpose and intent hadn't been made clearer.

Chuck suggested adding a group of farmers to the program immediately following A.G. Kawamura's talk who could give an overview of specialty crops in Lake County. Toni Scully, Mark Snyder, Paul Lauenroth, and Sky Hoyt were suggested.

Growers suggested for the afternoon panel included Fully Belly Farms, Colleen Rentsch, Danny & Deanna Goff, G Bar G Ranch, and Jim Leonardis. Buyers Panel suggestions included managers from

Hardester's, Riviera Foods, Foods Etc. and/or Sentry, Micky Patterson at the jail, JoAnn Saccato representing the community Co-Op, and restaurants such as Zino's, the Saw Shop and High Street Café.

In discussing the appropriateness of including an olive grower, Chuck said that olives only represent 12 out of 14,000 acres of irrigated lands.

Sky commented that it might be a good idea to approach the Food Summit from a perspective that promotes quality of life and benefits to the community. He suggested looking at similar locally grown programs in Placer County.

In response to Sky's suggestion that a workshop about fertilizer would be of greater interest to farmers, Susan said that it has been on her mind to fund such a workshop in the summer if the Food Summit budget is underspent. Sky suggested contacting Greg Giusti to organize the workshop as part of his Small Farm Education program.

Susan mentioned that Terre Logsdon found, upon reviewing some old Farmers' Finest files, that the issues identified in the early 1990's were the same as today's. Sky said that he thought it had been a mistake to try and grow membership instead of the program and that what finally stabilized Farmers' Finest was a merger with the Farmers' Markets Association.

During a discussion about Farmers' Market coupons, underutilization of Food Stamps, use of EBT at Farmers' Markets, and fresh food incentives, Sky commented that transportation remains the biggest obstacle to increased use of supplemental food programs to buy local produce.

Sky suggested offering Food Summit display space to buyers as well as growers and predicted that buyers' issues would revolve around price, quality and supply.

The meeting was adjourned at 4 p.m.