

**Group 2 to 5 Healthy Eating in BC Communities –
Food Production, Skill Building /Behaviour Change Program Delivery, Advocacy, Policy, Food Systems Change**

Date of Meeting: Dec. 2, 2009

Facilitators: Janice Macdonald, Sue Ross and Zena Simces

Attendees:

Janice Macdonald
Zena Simces
Pat Zilinsky
Cathy Richards
Barbarah Tinskamper

Gerry Kasten
Barbara Crocker
Pam Kheong
Mary Clifford
Margaret Yandel

Sydney Massey
Heather Deegan
Maria Burtlehaus

Regrets:

Deepthi Jayatilaka
Denise Weber
Deanna Tan
Rani Wangsawidjaya

Margaret Broughton
Diane Collis
Claire Gram
Maureen Rowlands
Stephanie Suski

Introduction – Janice Macdonald

- How did this get started – a small group met in September 2009 to see how the BCHLA Healthy Eating Strategy could be sustained in a time of financial restraint. The concerns around sustainability seemed to go beyond the BCHLA initiatives.
- A one day meeting in November was organized by a small volunteer planning group made up of Rose Soneff, Margaret Yandel, Janice Macdonald, Sydney Massey, Sue Ross and Zena Simces with the intent of bringing together a broader group of stakeholders to discuss how to move forward in a more coordinated and integrated fashion. Six topic areas were identified at this meeting. Topics related to schools were grouped together and held a follow-up conference call. The remaining groups on Food Production; Skill Building/Behaviour Change, Advocacy, Policy and Food System Change were grouped together for this conference call.
- Next steps after this conference call – the volunteer planning group will be meeting to discuss next steps. Intent is to collate the work and identify a common direction to move forward.

1) What are the priority actions to be taken?

Key Points	Potential Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BCHLA – ongoing advocacy from BCHLA on the social determinant of health is a key direction. • PHSA – Has prepared a report on food policy and food security which addresses healthy food in health care; important to get health care institution food services to embrace a healthy eating strategy. 	

What are the priority actions to be taken? Continued

- Need to strengthen the entire infrastructure for production and distribution of local food- not just produce but on all foods. This should take into consideration the capacity at local and regional levels. A cooperative may be necessary to help local farmers meet regulatory requirements.
- Need to build on the government's Produce Availability Plan – to enhance local capacity for the production and distribution of produce and other local food.
- We need a major policy focus. There is a need for a comprehensive approach to achieve a sustainable food system that includes policy and legislation at a provincial level and addresses issues relating to grassroots food production and preserving, technology; linking food with disease, etc.
- Health Authorities need to be involved and have a legitimate role through their responsibility for core public health programs.
- “When asked to provide guidance on how best to promote healthy eating in First Nations communities the participants stressed that it will be important to address issues and actions in the area of access, traditional foods, education/awareness (this includes community health worker training), and school based approaches.”
- Look at current organizational structures, roles and existing networks and determine who can take on various priorities.
- Need for a dialogue around funding – a discourse on the roles of the private and public sectors to facilitate continued funding, e.g., establishing a foundation; public/private partnerships, etc.
- Identify priority programs that are critical for the long term and determine how they can be sustained... e.g., Food Skills for Families, Brand Name Food List, etc.
- Need an overall strategy for managing ourselves in a period of contraction and keeping key elements alive. e.g.
 - keep strong, explicit linkages between grass roots, regional and provincial networks
 - focus on embedding food programs within other government mandates (housing, agr, etc) - no stand alone programs or projects (even when tempting)
 - keep looking at food programs through 3 lenses - food insecurity, poverty and (health inequities); universal healthy eating support (chronic disease prevention); environmental sustainability (environmental health)

2) What are the ways we can integrate our work?	
Key Points	Potential Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to integrate the healthy eating agenda with what is happening in Health Authorities around the implementation of core public health programs. This will help enhance accountability. Currently the Healthy Eating strategy work has been external to the agenda of decision makers in the Health Authorities and there is little alignment between the two agendas. Need to work to create common priorities and strategies. • The Community Nutritionists Council can play an important integrating role. Community nutritionists across the province need to have the mandate to do this as part of their public health role; they need to be kept informed and they can help facilitate discussions and forums to move the healthy eating/food security agenda forward. • Holding forum (s) would help connect people in communities as well as at the regional and provincial levels. These forums should include interests that span the broad food systems arena. • There is a need to have some place to house or nest all of the food networks and to share information and engage in dialogue. PHSA may be a possibility since it has a mandate. Linking with PHSA may help bring the food system into the governance structure of government and the health authorities. However, PHSA may not be in the best position to be an advocate. • Ensure that there are other avenues to advocate and engage other key partners outside of government to take on an advocacy role, e.g., Dietitians of Canada, BCHLA, PHABC, BC Food Systems etc. • Other suggestions to enhance an integrative approach include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Link Healthy Eating to a population health approach to help integrate ○ Strength the role of nutrition in early childhood development and family meals and use this as an avenue of integration. • With a project such as the new Food Access program for rural and remote communities, we could facilitate a communication strategy amongst us where we share which communities are being served presently, what's working well and with which populations/communities, what and who needs more help etc. The clearer and more organized we are, the easier the information will flow to the communities if and when they start asking for outside support/resources. 	

3) What are the next steps to keep the momentum in this category going?	
Key Points	Potential Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share capacity among interested stakeholders to keep momentum going until further funding is there. • Use the evaluations from the BCHLA initiatives to celebrate achievements and to identify strategies to keep the momentum going. Communicate these results to key decision-makers at all levels. Ensure Health Authority CEOs are informed. Put Healthy Eating and Food Security on the Health Authority leadership table. • Suggest that an advisory council be formed to bring all the key voices together that can have an impact on change at a policy and legislation level. • We need to highlight for key decision-makers at all levels when actions are not being implemented that they believe are happening. Need to increase awareness of the implementation issues. • Suggest effort be made to find strong political champions as well as champions among the Health Authority CEOs, and senior staff in key ministries. Dr. Eric Young is a potential champion. • Call upon the dietitian community (CNC) to take on a key role in bringing key players together from across the broad spectrum of the food system. • Identify possible forums that could bring key players together to discuss a comprehensive policy agenda and to promote discourse on funding options. • Link with ActNow BC – but promote a broader vision that would address a commitment to a sustainable food system. ActNow is currently undertaking a review to develop a post 2010 Strategy – we should take the opportunity to influence this plan. Three pillars remain the same - Healthy Eating, Physical Activity & Tobacco Reduction with the fourth pillar being broadened to Alcohol. Mental Health is an important aspect of wellness. • Request that the Provincial Health Officer's Report be updated to identify progress and outstanding issues relevant to the 2005 <i>Food, Health and Well-Being in British Columbia</i>. • Need to involve First Nations in discussion to identify our respective priorities (this may differ from health authority to health authority and/or nation to nation). At annual Gathering Wisdom events where health workers, band leadership and community members are brought together to discuss the priorities and needs of the BC First Nations health plan, much input has been provided with respect to Food Security and Nutrition. 	

4) What role or commitment can you offer?

- Everyone on the call indicated that would like to stay involved and be connected to this process as it unfolds. A few additional commitments include:
 - Pat – Will send information about this process to BC Pediatrics Society who would be interested to continue to be associated in an advocacy role.
 - Cathy – It is important to recognize that healthy eating is not just a personal responsibility but needs to be addressed at a policy level that would support good personal choice and is committed to support this.
 - Barbarah T– Would be interested in working at a provincial level and being a member of an advisory council to bring the voice of nutritionists to the table to develop provincial policy and legislation.
 - Barbara C – Will meet with her manager help link this work into Health Authority structure and will work on helping to define an expanded role for community nutritionists.
 - Pam – Is interested in working on strategies that will link/integrate healthy eating to food security and the food system.
 - Diane Collis - e-communication to a network of cooking and nutritional skill building programs across the province and opportunity for all resources, programs and initiatives relevant to skill building to be included in our site database, www.communitykitchens.ca
- Marg Yandel is developing a Year-in-Review/Communiqué on all the Healthy Eating Initiatives which is intended to cover the last 3 years, be informative and light and include success stories from the Health Authorities that Community Nutritionists have been involved in. It will also include some recommendations for the future. The aim is to distribute this widely to Health Authorities, senior leaders within the health sector and across other relevant government departments. It is due at the end of March. (*Suggestion that results from the BCHLA evaluation could be incorporated into this Communiqué. Also consideration should be given to how work from this consultation process might link in with the Communiqué.*)

Actions to be Taken:

Sue and Zena will distribute minutes of today's meeting.
Please share.

The Planning Committee will meet Wednesday Dec 16th to consider next steps, based on input from HE Community.

If you have further thoughts that you would like considered at this meeting, please email Sue at sueross@interchange.ubc.ca and/or Janice at jmacdonald@dietitians.ca

Join us at the next teleconference meetings:

Healthy Eating - Communities
([see below](#));

Healthy Eating at School
Wed January 5th 9:30-10:30
Conf Call 1-866-596-5278
ID 2331822#

**Next Meeting. Group 2 to 5 Healthy Eating - Communities. Wednesday, January 20, 3-4:30pm PST
1-866-613-5220 Conference ID: 6073012**

Please provide Sue Ross , sueross@interchange.ubc.ca your contact info if you have not already done this so you will be included in the overall Health Eating School and Community database.