

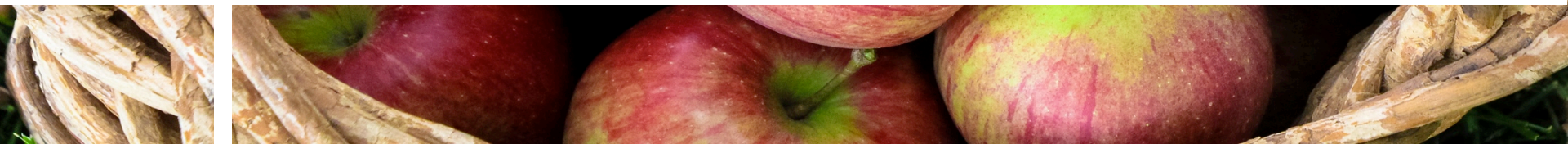


# ADVANCING A LOCAL FOOD COUNCIL NETWORK IN MICHIGAN

Tuesday, December 16 10:30am



Welcome!





# Speakers

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# Introduction

The phrase “local food council” is used throughout this presentation to refer to groups that convene around a defined sub-state geographic area to assess and recommend practices or policies that impact one or more aspects of the food system.



# Background

- ◆ **Michigan Food Policy Council**
  - ◆ Local Food Policy Council Taskforce
  - ◆ 2012 Report: Michigan Food Policy Council Network – A survey of local food policy councils and collaboration potentials in Michigan



# Background

- ◆ In the spring of 2014 the Center for Regional Food Systems at Michigan State University CRFS commissioned an assessment of the potential of a statewide local food council network.
  - ◆ Conducted phone interviews
  - ◆ Two in-person meetings (July and October)
  - ◆ Review and analysis of prior local food council network work

# Common Themes from Interviews



The formation of Food Policy Councils in Michigan is relatively new



Councils struggle with how to keep community members engaged

There is no one way for a council to get started in a community



Councils struggle with identity



The majority of councils surveyed are volunteer based



There is a lot of concern surrounding the word "policy"

Council members and leaders are passionate about their work



Nearly all councils have used the Good Food Charter to influence their work.



# Statewide Network

Interviews and meetings with council members identified the following six key functions for a statewide network:

- Provide a space for local councils to network with one another;
- Connect local councils to statewide policy information, issues and actions;
- Help local councils build capacity;
- Provide hands-on training to local food councils;
- Connect local policy information, issues and actions to other parts of the state;
- Connect local councils to national policy information, issues and actions.





# Network Functions

- ◆ Provide a space for local councils to network with one another



# Network Functions

- ◆ Connecting local councils to state level policy work was identified as an important function of a statewide network



# Network Functions

- ◆ Help local councils build capacity



# Network Functions

- ◆ Local council leaders desire hands-on training on a variety of topics that can be taken back and applied at the local level.



# Network Functions

- ◆ Connect local policy information, issues and actions to other parts of the state



# Network Functions

- ◆ Connect local councils to national policy information, issues and actions



# Good Food Charter Connection

- ◆ A statewide network can provide guidance to local food councils on ways utilizing the Charter and associated resources and connecting to other groups and networks through the Charter can support their work.

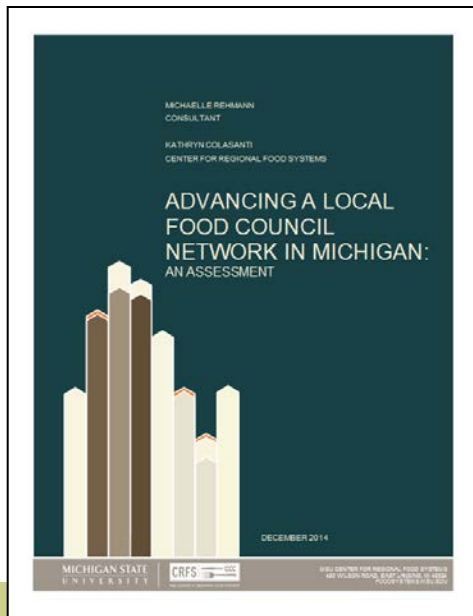
# CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

- Identify a network coordinator
- Confirm network membership with council representatives
- Determine network structure and logistics
- Set-up web platform for sharing network resources
- Clarify distinct role of the network and how it provide synergy with other existing networks
- Determine first-year priorities for capacity building and networking topics





# New Releases: Report & RFP



## Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems Request for Proposals Local Food Council Network Coordination

### Background

In 2012, the Michigan Food Policy Council (MFPC) convened a task force to explore a network of local food councils and conducted a survey of groups engaged in food system work. Over the course of 2014, the Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems (CRFS) contracted with a consultant to determine the level of interest in a statewide network as well as the desired functions of a network. CRFS interviews corroborate earlier MFPC work to reveal strong support for a statewide network. A December 2014 report – “Advancing a Local Food Council Network in Michigan”<sup>1</sup> – summarizes those findings to date and suggests network roles. This report should serve to inform the formation of the network and should be read in conjunction with this request for proposals.

### Project Description

We are requesting proposals to coordinate a new network in Michigan to be comprised of representatives from local food councils, or similar groups, and other interested partners around the state. This network will focus on building the capacity of local food councils in Michigan to work on policy issues, operate effectively and engage their communities. Preliminary work exploring the potential for a statewide local food council network identified the following six main roles of such a network:

- Provide a space for local councils to network with one another;
- Connect local councils to statewide policy information, issues and actions;
- Help local councils build capacity;
- Provide hands-on training to local food councils;
- Connect local policy information, issues and actions to other parts of the state;
- Connect local councils to national policy information, issues and actions.

### Scope of Work

The contractor, whether an individual or a team, will work with leaders and members of local food councils, as well as other interested partners, to formalize a statewide local food council network that will serve the aforementioned roles. The contractor will work with network members, stakeholders, groups and networks spanning the state of Michigan to help develop strong relationships between the local food council network and other networks and initiatives across the state, to facilitate trainings and capacity-building for network members on desired topics, and to identify connections to relevant local, state and national policy, issues and actions. The contractor will also work with CRFS staff coordinating the Michigan Good Food Charter<sup>2</sup> initiative to help identify ways that charter resources can be useful to local food councils as well as connections between the work of the councils and statewide charter efforts.



# RFP: Network Coordination

- ◆ **Host meetings every other month**
  - ◆ 3 times/year virtually; 3 times per year in person
  - ◆ Plan in person meetings around other meetings/events
- ◆ **Facilitate communication among councils**
- ◆ **Facilitate connections to other networks**
- ◆ **Compiling and sharing relevant resources**



# RFP: Parameters

- ◆ Budget: \$15,000 - \$20,000
- ◆ 12 months, possibility of annual renewal through 2017
- ◆ Due January 16, 2015
- ◆ Posted on CRFS website



# CRFS Support

- ◆ Page on the CRFS website for resources
- ◆ Listserv or contact database
- ◆ Assistance making connections with other networks and initiatives
- ◆ Provision of available CRFS meeting technologies
- ◆ Provision of meeting space and food and beverage within predetermined budget
- ◆ Support for trainings on policy engagement and racial equity



# CRFS Support

## ◆ Proposals sent to:

Liz Gensler

MSU Center for Regional Food Systems

517-353-1914

[gensler@msu.edu](mailto:gensler@msu.edu)





# Next Steps

- ◆ Help share RFP and report
- ◆ Request to be added to contact database
- ◆ Award contract in early 2015
- ◆ First network meeting targeted for April 2015



**CONNECTING  
ACROSS  
MICHIGAN**

**Thank You!**

**Advancing a Local Food Council Network in Michigan**