



SHAPE UP KITTITAS COUNTY—Food Access Coalition  
Saturday, March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2009  
9:00 AM-1:00 PM  
First Lutheran Church—Ruby St.

*"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." Margaret Mead*

## FOOD ACCESS COALITION SPRING WORKSHOP

### ATTENDEES

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**WHY DO A PROJECT REVIEW?** *A project review helps us think about what we've done, celebrate our successes, make improvements, remind us of our mission, and re-focus on the future. Here are the other reasons the participants came up with to do a project review:*

- To learn about resources
- Define themes
- Not get into ruts
- Look at what other communities have done
- Look at what has been accomplished and decide what to continue
- Discover the next steps
- The context has changed—economy, crises, etc.
- There are new needs
- Identify and update local resources
- TO FOCUS AGAIN

**TELLING OUR STORY** *In order to do some reminiscing and introductions to our new members about the Food Access Coalition's beginnings and accomplishments, we went around the room sharing how we got involved and some highlights from the Food Access Coalition's history. Each sentence began with "in the beginning," "and then," "but before that," or "meanwhile." Here are some of the highlights of the Food Access Coalition story...*

- In the beginning, Robin & Sarah from Shape Up Kittitas County met with Roger to talk about making food bank distributions healthier and getting more fresh produce donated to the food bank.
- Meanwhile, the rebirth of the community garden was happening, including several plots dedicated to food bank donations!
- And then, the Food Access Coalition had its first meeting and first workshop/retreat where the mission and preliminary goals were established.
- But before the workshop, the group toured the FISH Food Bank facilities at the First United Methodist Church.
- And then, we had a wonderful lunch meeting at Hilary's house in Upper County.
- Meanwhile, food bank distributions were increasing every month and some people could see the community need first hand.
- Meanwhile, Food Access Coalition members and staff began a promotion campaign to encourage local gardeners to donate surplus garden produce to local food banks.
- And then, the next year, members attended a food policy council workshop in Sea-Tac.
- And then the Food Access Coalition continued produce donation promotion by having a table at the Kittitas County Farmer's Market.
- Meanwhile, more and more people were hearing about the Food Access Coalition and getting connected!
- And then, volunteer extraordinaire, Billee from the FISH food bank started establishing relationships with CWU students to start a gleaning project for next year.
- But before that, coalition members toured the beautiful green community garden on a hot July day.
- And then, the Spring workshop was held.
- And then....???



**VALUES** *In teams of two, we talked about the values that each of us brings to the table. What does the Food Access Coalition bring to the community? Why are we involved in the Food Access Coalition? What values do we share with others involved? We wrote our ideas down and they were later organized into value groups. Here are what the results were:*

- **COMMUNITY**—community building, healthy communities, community gatherings, supporting each other, working together, connecting with community.



- EDUCATION—community classes on cooking and preserving, nutrition and healthy eating education, teaching self-sufficiency.
- SERVICE—giving back, getting involved, improving nutrition, being proactive vs. reactive.
- SUSTAINABILITY—sustaining activities and projects long-term, sustainable food systems, self-sufficiency (growing your own food), food security.

**MISSION & GOALS REVIEW** *As a reminder to current Food Access Coalition members and an introduction to new members, we began by reviewing the mission statement developed at our 2007 retreat, "To advocate for all people of Kittitas county to have consistent access to healthy food and an understanding of nutrition by promoting and developing local programs and partnerships." Does this still resonate with everyone? Is this reflective of the work of the Food Access Coalition? Is this a mission that everyone supports? There was some discussion about the word "advocate" and what that really means.*



*Next, we examined and discussed each of the preliminary goals of the Food Access Coalition and what has been accomplished in each area.*

1. GROWING THE COALITION
  - Toured the FISH food bank
  - Held planning retreat and created mission and goals
  - Washington Food Coalition emergency food summit
  - Food Access Coalition recruitment—Farmer's Market, Community Garden, Shape Up Coalition, etc.
  - Monthly meetings
  - Connections with other groups—4H, Ellensburg Youth and Community Center, etc.
  - Connection with CWU and Civic Engagement Center
2. INCREASE THE AVAILABILITY OF, USAGE OF, AND ACCESS TO FRESH FOODS
  - Produce donation project in 2007 & 2008—posters, radio, newspaper articles, farmer's markets, etc.
  - Start planning gleaning project
  - Distributed free seeds to various groups including the community garden
  - Held gardening class at FISH food bank
3. SUPPORT INFRASTRUCTURE OF LOCAL FOOD ACCESS PROGRAMS
  - Toured Moses Lake and Toppenish food banks
  - Toured & offered support to community garden
  - Toured upper county food bank
  - Supported FISH efforts to gain a new space
4. IDENTIFY COMMUNITY NEEDS, ASSETS AND RESOURCES
  - Created a list of food resources in Kittitas county
  - Stated collecting data about food insecurity, obesity, fruit and vegetable consumption, etc.

- Word of mouth sharing and informal networking
5. EDUCATION ABOUT NUTRITION
- Created recipe box for each of the 3 food banks

**PRIORITIES** *We separated into small groups of 3-4 people to discuss what should be the future priorities of the Food Access Coalition. As community members and people concerned about food access, what would you like to see the Food Access Coalition focus its efforts on? We shared some of our thoughts with the whole group and due to time constraints, postponed more in depth discussion and prioritizing until the next couple of meetings. Here are just some of the priorities that the small groups discussed:*



- Holding a community potluck or community event to bring people together around food access issues
- Increase coalition membership—formalize membership?
- Increase volunteers for upper county food bank
- Revamp and promote website
- Support and promote locally grown food
- Support food banks
- Identify ordinances that restrict food sustainability
- Outreach to schools re nutrition

**THE END** *To wrap up, we had an informal discussion about how the day went, ate a wonderful soup and sandwich lunch catered by Pink Catering, watched a slide show of pictures from Food Access Coalition activities over the past couple of years, and those who were able joined Roger for a tour of the FISH Food Bank. All in all, it was a fun day that helped re-orient the Food Access Coalition for future activities and gather more friends and participation for those activities!*

*Thanks to Shelly for the yummy morning snacks! Thank you to Colleen at Heifer International for sponsoring the meeting space and for helping to facilitate the workshop! Thanks to Shape Up Kittitas County for providing lunch! And most of all, thanks to everyone who attended the workshop!*

