

Community Gardens Coalition Notes

12PM Wed Feb.3rd at Rotch-Jones-Duff House & Garden Museum

In Attendance

Cindy Barber	RJD House & Garden Museum Staff
Dave Weed	Healthy City Fall River
Derek Christianson	Brix Bounty Farm
Jarrad Plante	LEADS Program (UMD)
Hope Hallett	GNB Garden Club
Kathleen Christianson	UMD Office of Campus and Community Sust.
Marcia Picard	Children in Balance, Fall River
Nancy Kurtz	
Robert Barboza	
Virginia Senna Davis	Diabetes Association, Inc. and Serenity Gardens

Announcements

[Grow A Garden At Your School - This Year!](#) - A Very Special Workshop and Q&A with the Children's Garden Network. **Saturday, February 6 | 8:30AM - 12:00PM | Bristol, RI | [directions](#) | [website](#) - www.childrensgardennetwork.org**

[Roots Down New Bedford](#) – Wintertime Garden Planning Session – 4-6PM on 4 Thursdays (Feb 11, 25, Mar 18, 25)

Also, there is a workshop on organic landscaping in the evening March 4th at Rotch-Jones-Duff House & Garden Museum.

Community Updates

- Fall River (Dave Weed and Marcia Picard)– Lots of pending grant activity, including a round of funding that would allow for the hiring of a part-time garden coordinator for the upcoming season. Position will likely be 10 hours/week and will seek to hire a Fall River resident. New gardens are likely to start up this year, including gardens on the Housing Authority Properties. The Watson School Garden has been a success to date; one goal is to eventually have gardens at every school in Fall River.
- New Bedford - Serenity Gardens Project (Ginny Senna Davis) - The Serenity Gardens project in the south end has been very successful. They currently have a waiting list for the 2010 growing season; and are looking forward to expanding the number of raised beds
- New Bedford – LEADS Project (Jarrad Plante) – Project with local middle schools and high schools in New Bedford and Fall River; teamed up with UMD Students. This spring they are focusing on sustainability and school gardens. Will be looking for guest speakers, field trips to local farms, etc.
- Community Gardens 2010 Calendar: Kudos to Nancy Kurtz for putting together a wonderful 2010 Calendar highlighting local community gardens. Nancy is willing to consider assembling a 2011 Calendar for next year; please consider taking photos during this upcoming growing season for future efforts.
- The Prosperity of the Commons – USDA Grant Submission (Derek) – After a terrific effort, with many thanks to everyone who attended planning meetings and submitted letters of support, we were recently notified that our submission would not be considered for review. Due to technical problems on the day of submission, we didn't meet the 5PM deadline (submission was complete a little after 6PM). We can repurpose the grant narrative for a 2010 submission.

Collaboration

Southeastern Massachusetts Council on Sustainability – Food&Agriculture Working Group – Letters to the Editor Campaign and Local Food Challenge.

We have identified the following topics for letters to the editor, **we still need to ID authors:**

- Feb 15th Peak Oil and Food – Nancy Lee Wood -
- Mar 1st School Lunches - ? _____ - This should correspond with legislative timetable.
- Mar 15th Nutrient Density and Soils – Derek C. – before Mar 27th event at BCAHS
- Mar 30th Where Does Your Food Come From (and farmland preservation)? - _____
- Apr 13th Wise Use of Water Resources (and food production) - ? **Coalition for Buzzards Bay?**
- Apr 27 School Gardens – Steve Walach?? Or other teacher in school garden movement
- May 10 Investing in Agriculture – Sustainable Wealth Generation – Derek C.
- May 24 Know Your Farmer – SEMAP Staff or Board Member??

Other Topics - Brainstorm – Farmland Preservation, Grow Local Movement - gardens, Hunger Relief and Community Farms/Gardens, Compost (fall topic?) and more- **Add Your Suggestion by contacting Derek.**

It was suggested that we (food&ag working group) connect with SEEAL, UMD, and Claude Hoopes , who are working on developing a Southcoast Energy Challenge Campaign and website for launch in April 2010. Question is could we include an interface for local food challenge on that site as a way to promote growing local but also as an important way to gather data from home production. It's been identified that home garden production is often one part of a foodshed analysis that is most difficult to measure because it's outside of the "economic" sphere of trade/sales data.

Resources - see also <http://www.brixbounty.com/ag-economics-policy/>

- Food Policy Councils: Lessons Learned (new report from the CFSC) http://www.foodsecurity.org/pub/Food_Policy_Councils_Report.pdf
- Healthy Corner Stores Network - <http://healthycornerstores.org/> and Johns Hopkins's program focusing on healthy local choices... <http://www.healthystores.org/>
- Grant Listings from the [Children's Garden Network](http://www.childrensgardennetwork.org) – www.childrensgardennetwork.org
- New England Grass Roots Environmental Fund - <http://grassrootsfund.org/grants/>
- Grant Opportunity for Community Led Food System Work - Communities Creating Healthy Environments – Due at end of February - <http://ccheonline.org/>
- **Mentoring Available for Innovative Community Food Project Evaluation**
 - *Are you looking for an innovative, participatory approach to evaluating your community food systems work?*
 - *Do you value participatory and reflective strategies for telling the story of your organization's impact?*

CFSC is launching a project to provide **free mentoring to four community food system organizations** interested in utilizing [Whole Measures for Community Food Systems \(CFS\)](#) to evaluate their impact. Selected organizations will work one-on-one with a mentor who will support their community with implementation of Whole Measures CFS. They also will **participate in a peer-learning group** to fine tune and reflect on their process, deepen learning across organizations, and explore innovative approaches to challenges. This work will occur mostly through conference calls and email exchanges, but participants will be invited to an in-person session in October 2010 in New Orleans.

CFSC is looking for organizations that are active in community food systems work; committed to evaluation, social justice, and participatory processes; and interested in working within their organization or community to implement a Whole Measures CFS evaluation.

Applications are due by Monday, March 15. For more information, contact [Jeanette Abi-Nader](#). For more information on Whole Measures CFS (or to download a copy), visit the [CFSC website](#). (www.foodsecurity.org)

Next Meeting – Wednesday April 7th at Noon at Coachman's House - Rotch-Jones-Duff House&Garden Museum