

County Board

March 22, 2012
Handouts

Item XI-A-1: Public Support of Establishment of Local Foods Policy Council

To: Champaign County Board Members

From: Pattsy Petrie

Re: Local Food Policy Council resolution submitted electronically

Below are many messages in support of the passage of this resolution submitted electronically and are being shared with my fellow board members with permission of the various authors. The most recent message appears first and then in reverse chronological order.

.....

MJ Walker to me show details 3:40 AM (2 hours ago)

Dear Pattsy,

As small sustainable farmers ourselves we are supportive of a board that is dedicated to critically thinking about how to make our food supplies sustainable and dependable. We believe strongly that local foods can be part of the solution and would simply like to voice our support for a council of people interested in ensuring the public's access to sustainably produced foods and policies that support rather than penalize small food producers of all kinds.

Sincerely,

MJ Walker and Wendy Heller
The Miulberries Farm and Orchard

.....

Steve and Ruth Wegman struweg@gmail.com 5:37 PM (47 minutes ago)

to me

Please do what you can to support the use of more local food.

Thanks,

Ruth

.....

William Rummler w.a.rummler@gmail.com 1:08 PM (5 hours ago)

to me, cgcomments

Dear Boardmembers,

I live and work in Champaign County, and I think that the formation of the Champaign County Local Food Policy Council is an extremely low-risk investment of my taxpayer dollars into a project whose precedent has already been set nationwide with a high probability of providing great community benefit. Please ask yourself: What is the expected *net* cost to taxpayers of setting up and maintaining an FPC whose responsibilities and activities are specifically designed to improve the local economic situation, especially considering the fact that a significant portion of Champaign County's local economy is already food- and agriculture-based? My opinion and my hope is that the answer is, "There is almost certainly no net cost, only a noticeable net gain and distributed improvement in the quality of life for all residents of Champaign County."

Thank you.

.....

David Krooks krooks@cal.berkeley.edu 5:47 AM (12 hours ago)

to me, akurtz8, 2jaba, cpiusweibel, cweibel

17 March 2012

Respected Members of the County Board,

I write to encourage you to vote in favor of the formation of a Champaign County Food Policy Council.

Many members of my Parish (The Chapel of St. John the Divine [Episcopal]) have worked long and hard over the years in support of the Daily Bread Soup Kitchen, and for years I have supported the Eastern Illinois Foodbank. The efforts of these worthy organizations clearly demonstrate that Champaign County is the home to many individuals and families who regularly go hungry.

Champaign County is also home to both large- and small-scale farmers, and to many other businesses connected to the production, distribution, or sale of foodstuffs. A County that is so deeply engaged in the food industries must begin to think corporately, intentionally, coherently, and holistically about how to address the food policy issues it faces now and will continue without strong leadership to face in the future.

I urge you all to begin to provide that strong leadership and support the formation of a Champaign County Food Policy Council.

Sincerely yours,

David A. Krooks, Ph.D.
406 S Elm St
Champaign, IL 61820

alexander murray travel.murray@gmail.com 8:57 AM (9 hours ago)

to me

I am an Urbana resident of 35 years, a Co-op shareholder and wish to support the Food Policy Council. Unfortunately I am in London until April 1st and would be grateful if you would add my name to those in support at the County Board Meeting next Thursday.

Thank you,

Alexander Murray,
508 W Washington,
Urbana, Il. 61801.
217-367-3172.

erik chapman silencio012@yahoo.com 12:20 AM (18 hours ago)

to me

Pattsi Petrie:

Although I will not be able to attend the meeting on March 22, as a resident of Champaign County I support the proposition to create and maintain a Food Policy Council as outlined in the current proposal. I believe that a council of this nature will provide both health and economic advantages for the residents of Champaign county as well as the deserved prestige for having created a forward-thinking, locally focused group concerned with the essential needs of its constituency.

Sincerely,
Erik Chapman
325 N. Fair St.
Champaign, IL

Matt Rundquist mattrundquist@gmail.com Mar 16 (2 days ago)

to me

Pattsi,

Thank you for the information! Unfortunately most of SECS will be gone for break, but if there's any way we can help in the future please let me know. This sounds like a great initiative that I would love to help with in any way.

.....

Leslie Cooperband prairiefruits@gmail.com Mar 6 (11 days ago)

to me

Hi Pattsi:

I am sorry, but i haven't had a chance to craft a full letter in support of the Local Food Policy Council. However, if you could express our support for formation of this council (Prairie Fruits Farm) for the public record, that would be great. I believe having a county wide council with a charge to help build a local food system for the county will help coalesce the existing and disparate efforts already underway in this area. It will provide legitimacy for local food enterprises as sound economic development, and hopefully convince Champaign county residents and politicians that it is worth investing in such enterprises and preserving farmland in the peri-urban regions of the county to foster local food production and processing endeavors.

Sincerely,

Leslie Cooperband and Wesley Jarrell
Co Owners, Prairie Fruits Farm and Creamery

.....

6 March 2012

Dear members of the County Board:

I'm a resident of Urbana, at 412 W. Green Street, and writing in support of the proposed Champaign County Local Food Policy Council.

There are some important reasons for supporting this Council:

- Every year, tens of billions of dollars leaves the Illinois economy from food purchases. Champaign County realizes a portion of that economic loss. Strengthening the local food sector could provide a significant economic boost for the county.

- Some of the most productive farmland is right here in Champaign County, and it is critical that we protect this land.
- There numerous environmental and infrastructure benefits associated with expanded production and utilization of local foods.

There are many more reasons for supporting this Council, and together we could enumerate and elaborate on all of the many benefits to Champaign County. Instead, I'd like to focus my comments on describing some current, state-wide local foods activities, and in so doing, I hope that you will be able to imagine a linkage between Champaign County and these state-wide activities. I also hope that this description will help to convince you that right now is the opportune moment for Champaign County to join in the Illinois local foods movement, by endorsing the formation of the Champaign County Local Food Policy Council.

Right now there is a concerted state-wide effort to simultaneously expand the production capacity of Illinois farms that feed into the local foods sector and support the development of infrastructure for aggregating, processing, and distributing local foods. The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity and Illinois USDA Rural Development are working together to provide financial assistance to help producers expand production and to help entrepreneurs start "food hubs." According to USDA, a food hub is "a business or organization that is actively coordinating the aggregation, distribution, and marketing of source-identified locally or regionally grown food products from primarily small to mid-sized producers." The Champaign County Local Food Policy Council would provide a grass-roots linkage between producers in Champaign County and these state-wide efforts.

The Illinois Farm Bureau is actively involved in the supporting the development of a local foods sector. For example they're sponsoring a series of events called, "Meet the Buyer," where local farmers can meet with buyers from wholesalers, grocery stores, and restaurants to learn about how to enter into new market channels. There will be a "Meet the Buyer" event at the Champaign County Farm Bureau on March 27, and it will also include presentations on Food Hubs and educational seminars by Ag Extension. It will be followed by a Food Hub Summit in the evening.

Ag Extension has a state-wide unit called, "Small Farms Local Foods." They provide a wealth of educational information and expertise that can help local farmers expand production capacity and enter new markets. The Champaign County Local Food Policy Council can facilitate a dialog between Champaign County farmers and Ag Extension educators, to help identify and address the most important needs for information, training, financial assistance, and other resources.

The rising popularity of farmers markets and community supported agriculture gives evidence to the energy and excitement about the possibility of continued expansion of the local foods sector. The recent and dramatic growth of the Common Ground Food Coop and other stores like it point to the possibility of local foods becoming more mainstream and contributing to a larger share of the larger food economy.

The table is set, and the time is right for the formation of the Champaign County Local Food Policy Council. The Council would be perfectly positioned to connect Champaign County farmers and food

entrepreneurs with the activities and opportunities associated with the Illinois local foods movement, and it would help the County to more fully realize the wealth of its agricultural land. Please support the Champaign County Local Food Policy Council.

Thank you.

.....

Barn12@aol.com Feb 14

to me

Pattsi,

I will be unable to attend tonight's meeting of the The Champaign County Committee of the Whole. However, I would like to register my support for the establishment of a Champaign County Local Food Policy Council.

In addition to County Board adopted economic development policy, citizen support for local foods has been expressed in both the BigSmallAll visioning process, and the Land Resource Management Plan.

A Local Food Policy Council could be a valuable resource to inform County Board decisions concerning economic development, agricultural viability, and land use.

Champaign County support and involvement in a growing phenomenon, and at little or no cost, is an opportunity not to be missed.

Hal Barnhart
469 CR 1500 N
Champaign, IL 61822

To: Champaign County Board Members

From: Patti Petrie

Re: **PART II** Local Food Policy Council resolution submitted electronically

Below are more messages in support of the passage of this resolution submitted electronically and are being shared with my fellow board members with permission of the various authors. The most recent message appears first and then in reverse chronological order.

In addition, I am including information from the NACo's policy steering committee decisions during a two-day period of time at the Legislative Conference that I recently discovered. The resolution fits well with two proposed policies under the category, Agriculture and Rural Affairs.

1. Supporting the Local Farms, Food and Jobs Act—support of local and regional farm and food systems. **Adopted Policy**—NACo supports the Local Farms, Food and Jobs Act (S. 1773 and H.R. 3286).

2. Farm Bill Programs Supporting Local Food Systems—**Adopted Policy**—NACo supports changes to the Farm Bill, which would support county development and expansion of local food systems by allowing schools the option to use a portion of the USDA Agriculture Marketing Service school lunch commodity dollars for the purchase of local and regional foods and securing support for the infrastructure necessary for local and regional food systems to thrive.

.....
Holly Nelson to me show details 10:33 AM (38 minutes ago)

Patti,

Thank you for your work on behalf of the Food Policy Council. I think this would be a great resource for our local economy. The rapid expansion of the Common Ground Coop, the Urbana Market at the Square, North First Street Farmers Market, various community gardening initiatives, and small businesses related to these enterprises show that demand for local food is increasing. A stronger local food economy will provide the people of our county with better access to nutritious foods and more jobs. The Food Policy Council will be a great way to connect the interests of rural and urban residents. I urge you and the other members of the county board to vote in support of the Food Policy Council.

Regards,
Holly Nelson

--

Holly Nelson
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Master of Urban and Regional Planning, 2012
Graduate Research Assistant, Facilities and Services, Sustainability and Bicycle Planning

22 March 2012

To: Champaign County Board
From: Diane W. Marlin
Re: Champaign County Local Food Policy Council

I support the creation of a Champaign County Local Food Policy Council. This advisory board could identify and enhance economic development opportunities related to the production, processing, distribution, and consumption of regionally-produced foods. These activities can help us to achieve long term goals such as:

- Produce better-tasting and higher-quality foods;
- Strengthen the local food system;
- Encourage business and institutional purchases of local foods;
- Improve accessibility and affordability of local foods;
- Reduce transportation costs and energy consumption;
- Promote sustainable farming practices;
- Support food entrepreneurs and food artisans;
- Increase farmer income;
- Improve food system security;
- Attract young people to farming as a profession;
- Integrate local food production with food aggregation and processing; and
- Enhance genetic diversity in our food supply.

We'd make better progress toward these goals with a more coordinated effort among stakeholders. The Local Food Policy Council could help by fostering collaboration, recommending policies, and addressing barriers to further development of the local food system. I urge you to support this proposal.

Diane W. Marlin
Alderwoman, Ward 7
Urbana City Council



Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity

Pat Quinn, Governor • Warren Ribley, Director

March 21, 2012

Champaign County Board Members:

Re: Champaign County Local Food Policy Council Resolution

In 2009, Governor Quinn signed the Illinois Food, Farms and Jobs Act into law with the intention of improving the local farm economy in Illinois. Over the past few years there has been an explosion of development toward new local food systems which the Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity has directly supported in numerous ways.

The proposed Champaign County Local Food Policy Council Resolution will establish the foundation that will preserve and expand the local food economy in Champaign County. Further, this council will be in a position to think regionally relative to developing food hubs. Because of the economic strength of the area as well as the geography, Champaign County has the potential to be one of the primary food distribution hubs for the region.

After the Local Food Policy council members set the goals and timeline for accomplishments, I would suggest making contact with Paul Faraci, DCEO Office of Regional Outreach, East Central Region and Todd Rusk, UIUC Associate Director, Energy and Sustainable Business Programs. Mr. Rusk is a member of the USDA/DCEO Food Hub Partnership. Great outcomes can be accomplished when we strive to work collaboratively, I encourage you to access these resources in an attempt to better facilitate results that positively impact the county and the Region.

I am pleased that the Champaign County board is considering this resolution as a means by which to enhance the interaction of local foods and economic development. I therefor support the Champaign County Local Food Policy Council Resolution and look forward to working with the Council once established.

Sincerely,

Warren Ribley
Director

www.ildceo.net

500 East Monroe
Springfield, Illinois 62701-1643
217/782-7500 • TDD: 800/785-6055

James R. Thompson Center
100 West Randolph Street, Suite 3-400
Chicago, Illinois 60601-3219
312/814-7179 • TDD: 800/785-6055

2309 West Main, Suite 118
Marion, Illinois 62959-1180
618/997-4394 • TDD: 800/785-6055