

Red Lodge Area Food Partnership Council

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...concerned individuals are making progress in Red Lodge; other towns all over the country are also. It’s a new movement, a new cause, a new Food Revolution. And we are all a part of it.” states Kate Jones, senior at Red Lodge High School. Read her full article below.



Winter Mini Farmers’ Market

Thursday, February 9th, 10am- 1pm at the Elks Club (114 North Broadway)

Are you looking for fresh, local food this winter? Do you miss having a direct connection with the people who are growing, raising, or preparing your food? And are you already dreaming about your own garden for next season?

If so, come shop at our monthly Winter Mini Farmers’ Market on Thursday, February 9 from 10am to 1pm at the Elks Club! Some of the vendors from the summer market, as well as a few new faces, will join us for the event. They’ll be selling delicious baked goods, fresh eggs, root vegetables, sprouts, herbs and greens, local meat, wildflower and herb seeds, and wonderful jams, herb butter, and pesto. Yum!

In addition to all the local food that the vendors will bring, the Elks Club will have their bar open and offer lunch for sale. We hope to see you then!

Dried Food Buyers Group

Many people are unaware how many types of food are grown in Montana. In an effort to promote Montana foods beyond the meat and produce, especially those grown sustainably and/or organically, we're experimenting with a dried food buyers group this month. A variety of Montana-grown beans, lentils and flours will be divided equally into 24 shares - the amounts will not be very large at the outset in order to test the waters and sample products. Many of the approximately \$12 shares have been spoken for, but there will be a few more available at the Winter Mini Farmers’ Market if you'd like to give it a try. Look for Martha Brown or Janet Peterson.

Celebrating A Year of Local Food – New Date!

Saturday, February 25, 6:00 pm at the Elks Club

Please mark your calendars to join the Food Partnership Council and Red Lodge Clay Center in celebrating local food, local art and our community. FPC is marking the one-year anniversary of the “Beartooth Front Community Forum: Improving Community Well-Being Through Food” with a dinner event on Saturday, February 25 at the Elks Club in Red Lodge. The Red Lodge Clay Center will exhibit ceramic art relating to food. Local chefs and restaurants will present a dinner featuring

local food. We will share local food success stories and acknowledge individuals who have made significant contributions to local food efforts. So please plan to come to enjoy delicious local food in February, to learn more about what is happening with our local foods initiatives, and to share your ideas as we move forward.

Restaurants participating in this event are:

Bridge Creek
Café Regis
Carbon County Steakhouse
City Bakery
das Kuchenhaus Bakery
Elks Club
Mas Tacos
The Pollard

The evening will begin at 6:00 for art viewing, appetizers and conversation. Dinner will begin at 7:00 for the modest price of \$18 per person. Reservations are required and can be made [here](#) or contact Janet Peterson at (406) 425-3806.

We look forward to seeing these chefs, the producers that provide the food and all of you at the celebration!

CCRC Annual Meeting Invitation

Thursday, Feb. 16, 6-8:30 pm

The Carbon County Resource Council (CCRC) is extending an open invitation to their membership and new friends to attend a potluck and annual meeting on Thursday, Feb. 16, 6:00 to 8:30 pm, at the Red Lodge Area Community Foundation building.

Bring a potluck dish to share and listen to what CCRC has accomplished in the past year aligned with our mission of advocating responsible use of resources and finding solutions to problems that affect our unique quality of life.

This year we look forward to directly participating in land stewardship and to the preservation of family farms and ranches by providing the information and tools necessary to give our citizens an effective voice in decisions that affect our lives.

Short multiple presentations will be given updating area residents on some of the challenges we face in Carbon County and two short videos will be shown, directed and produced by Deborah Muth, highlighting Red Lodge and for the "Focus on Health" contest showcasing students discovering where their food comes from and how to connect school food programs to the local "farm to table" movement.

Meet and greet other environmentally conscious citizens for an evening of information and fun. Hope to see you there!



A Path to Healthy Living

By Kate Jones, Senior at Red Lodge High School

Note from the Food Partnership Council: We asked Kate to contribute an article for this newsletter. We couldn't be happier with her message.

About three years ago, when I was fifteen years old, I had the opportunity to go to France for the entire month of July. I stayed with a family who lived in a small village, the closest town not more than ten minutes' drive away. They lived in a stone apartment that had a cobblestone courtyard, a small vegetable and flower garden, and a barn for storage. In the front yard grew a tree bearing some kind of nuts, and apricot orchards rolled over the hilly landscape beyond. My most vivid memory remains the brilliant fields of sunflowers, their beaming faces turned toward the sun like a sea of glowing gold.

During that month I spent in France, I learned what a healthy, sustainable lifestyle could look like. Both mother and father and daughter would at least walk, if not run, everyday for exercise and were of utmost physical health. Their diet was comprised of fresh fruits and a plentiful variety of vegetables, often locally or home-grown. I distinctly remember the mother lecturing me on how it was very important to peel the store-bought peaches because of the chemicals used by the farmers. Their meals were balanced and portions were modest (especially meat); dessert was occasional, if not rare. Eating this way, even for only one month, helped me realize how little food one actually needs to feel energized and to be healthy, as long as all the necessary nutrients are being supplied. It was shocking for me to realize just how much excess, yet also malnutrition, the average American diet contains. I remember meeting people in France who would be surprised at my size and how slender I was – they said how they had expected all Americans to be fat.

This experience in France was the first thing that made me change the way I lived, ate, and exercised. From then on, upon returning home, I ate less and was very conscious of what I was eating and how it would impact or contribute to my overall health. I also made sure to include some sort of exercise in my schedule every day. The changes in my habits quickly spread to my whole family, and looking back, I can see how our lifestyle improved because of these changes we made.

Last year, I took an anatomy class at school, and this too increased my fascination of the human body and how it works – what it needs to run properly. It is an incredibly complex system of chemical reactions, and everything we put into our bodies *becomes* our bodies. Looking at the American diet of processed, fatty, and sugary foods, I began to develop an interest in pursuing a career as a nutritionist. Personally, I had already discovered the basic ingredients to constructing and keeping good overall health and a healthy lifestyle, but I wanted to help those who perhaps have not yet.

So that is a summary of the chain of events that has led me to this point. As a senior in high school, I have decided to attain a major in nutrition, favoring the physiological and counseling side of the

matter. I want to be able to share with others what I have learned about how simple it is to be healthy.

Inspired by this desire, I have joined both the Wellness Committee (which is working to integrate healthy choices into the school lunch program) and the Food Partnership Committee (which is working to promote locally-grown food, community gardens, and other healthy options for Red Lodge citizens). I find these meetings very interesting; I enjoy listening to the individuals contributing their own ideas, and I find it heart-lifting to watch how every different side can come together, compromise, and create one successful change.

Since the semester change, I have also begun a class called Nutrition and Wellness, or The Whole Plate, taught by Karen Kosorok. It's a wonderful way to start the day; we cook healthy food, watch movies about healthy food, discuss healthy food, and eat healthy food. Mrs. Kosorok is leading her students in an exploration of the 'locally-grown food' movement, about how what we eat influences our performance every day, and how enjoyable it can be to live healthy. So far, she is doing an excellent job, and I think the message is spreading.

I also have been allowed to 'job shadow' with Therese Picasso- Edwards at the hospital a two days a week. It's very interesting to join her as she handles her job as a dietitian and nutritionist for patients and children. By doing this, I will be exposed to where a career in nutrition might someday lead me, and it will give me an idea of what the job entails. I am very grateful to be given this opportunity.

The American culture's food situation is currently very out of control and very unhealthy. But slowly, I think people are beginning to realize how far we've strayed from our roots in nature, and have begun to take small steps toward a more basic, health-conscious relationship to their food. On our own small scale, the two committees of concerned individuals are making progress in Red Lodge; other towns all over the country are also. It's a new movement, a new cause, a new Food Revolution. And we are all a part of it.

Healthier Food = Healthier Kids

By Alyssa Charney, Montana FoodCorps Member

Do you believe school food programs should provide nutritious meals that students are excited to eat? I do. And really, how could you not? When it comes to the goal of feeding kids healthy food, we're all on the same page. Food service directors, parents, teachers, school boards, farmers, and community members all want what's best for the kids.

But the tricky part comes when schools, armed only with tight budgets and limited staff, have to figure out exactly how to transform that belief into action. Lucky for us, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) just released [new and improved regulations](#) that outline how to turn our shared belief into a reality.

Buried within hundreds of pages of rules are specific guidelines that schools will have to comply with beginning this fall. Some of the regulations will go into effect immediately, while others will be gradually implemented over the next ten years. For the first time ever, entire meals will have calorie caps. The rules will set limits on saturated fat, trans fat, and sodium, while increasing the required servings of fruits and vegetables. By July 1, 2012 at least half of all grains served must be

whole grain rich, and all must be whole grain rich by July 1, 2014. All milk will have to be 1% or less.

Some may say that it's not the government's place to tell schools what foods to serve. However, it makes much more sense to think of the new regulations not so much as an "Eat this because I said so," but rather a "You want to support healthy kids? Us too. Here are some guidelines to help make that happen."

These regulations are a huge step in the right direction. But they're not perfect. Last year Congress blocked USDA's initial draft of the guidelines, which would have prevented tomato paste on pizza from being counted as a vegetable, and would have limited the number of times that potatoes (most often in the form of french fries) could be served to only twice a week. It's unfortunate that powerful interests stood in the way of improved nutrition, but that doesn't mean schools can't additionally make their own informed decisions about how to serve healthy meals.

And that's why what we do at the local level matters. We will continue making the changes we believe in, going above and beyond the new regulations. Not only will we make menu improvements, but we will also teach students about healthy eating habits. And not only will we serve fresh vegetables, but we will also empower students to grow (and cook!) those vegetables, pushing them to consistently ask where their food is coming from.

The new USDA regulations are an important starting point for improving childhood nutrition in schools, and it's up to us as a community to go from there and build a school food system that feeds and nourishes the next generation of healthy leaders.



Have You Tried?

Fennel is crunchy and slightly sweet, with a mild licorice flavor and loaded with Vitamin C. It is a celery-like plant with a large white bulb and feathery leaves that resembles dill. The stalks are topped with feathery green leaves near which flowers grow and produce fennel seeds. Many times fennel is associated with Mediterranean cooking. The bulb, stalk, leaves and seeds are all edible. When purchasing, look for crisp, smooth white bulbs and unwilted leaves that are a fresh green.

Never cooked with fennel bulb before? Try this scrumptious recipe for Potato-Fennel Gratin from The Barefoot Contessa Cookbook:

<http://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/ina-garten/potato-fennel-gratin-recipe/index.html>

Want to get More Involved?

Join FPC or attend our meetings as a guest if you're interested in helping. The next meeting is February 9 at 4 p.m. We meet once per month at the Red Lodge Area Community Foundation, 24 West 13th Street in Red Lodge. Meetings include progress reports on subjects such as gardening, producer/consumer coordination, composting, and school food programs. Contact Martha Brown at mbrown.mt@gmail.com or call (406) 445-7214.

Suggested Reading

<http://www.motherearthnews.com/sustainable-farming/nutrient-value-of-food-zm0z11zphe.aspx>

<http://www.treehugger.com/green-food/keep-monsanto-out-of-your-garden-this-spring.html>

<http://www.fooddialogues.com/learn-about-your-food>