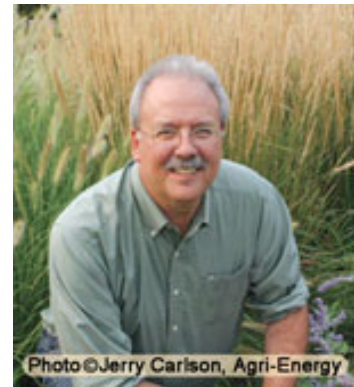


Red Lodge Area Food Partnership Council

“To me, a food system is the whole set of relationships that gets us from a farm to the food at our tables,” — Ken Meter, Crossroads Resource Center

Ken Meter Event: Apr 12

Join the Red Lodge Area Food Partnership Council in celebrating their second anniversary of promoting local food by welcoming Ken Meter to Red Lodge on Friday, April 12, 7:00 pm, at the Elks Club. His talk is titled “**Local Food as a Strategy for Economic Development.**” Ken is one of the foremost food system analysts in the U.S. and President of Crossroads Resource Center, <http://www.crcworks.org>. He is a strategic consultant to food hubs and food business clusters across the country. Meter will share his experiences and findings, while offering innovative ideas to strengthen our community's local food system.



Crossroads' Ken Meter started strategizing for community-based foods in 1974, as part of a citizen's group that was concerned about equity in the food system. Today, Ken speaks across the country averaging one presentation per week for the past three years. He feels privileged to help nurture the rapidly emerging local foods movement.

Along the way, Ken has helped change the way we think about food. He appears to be the first one to use the phrase “farm and food”, to distinguish the needs of commodity producers from those farmers who sell foods direct to consumers (January 2001). He was the first to call for a federal “food bill” (July 2006), addressing the entire array of issues from farm to fork. He also was the first to call for federal farm policy to focus on communities rather than commodities (December 2003).

We hope you will join us for this unique opportunity to listen to and dialogue with Ken talk about wealth, health and community self-reliance through a strong local food economy. We encourage attendance of community members and neighbors across sectors including farming, economic development, tourism, planning, education and health in order to set the stage for cross-specialty dialogues about collaborative ways to strengthen our local food economy and advance the well-being of our community.

The Food Partnership Council thanks the Beartooth Front Community Forum, Carbon County Resource Council and Beartooth RC&D for their sponsorship of this evening. This event is free and will include desserts made with local food by local chefs. For more information, contact Janet Peterson at foodpartnership@gmail.com or (406) 425-3806.

NCAT Poultry Workshop: Apr 11

The National Center for Appropriate Technology, the Mission Mountain Food Enterprise Center, and the Salish Kootenai College are offering a pastured poultry workshop on April 11th in Hamilton, MT from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm at the Bitterroot Inn and Conference Center, 139 Bitterroot Plaza Drive in Hamilton, MT. The theme of this event is “Integrating Pastured Poultry Production into Farming Operations and Marketing” with keynote speaker, Janie Burns, co-owner of HomeGrown Poultry LLC.

Janie Burns has been active in providing local food for local people since 1989, when she started selling organic vegetables at Boise’s first farmers market. She has most recently helped to create the new Boise Farmers Market, where she will sell grass-fed lamb and pastured poultry raised on her 10-acre Meadowlark Farm south of Nampa, Idaho. Over the past 24 years, she has raised a wide variety of crops and sold to restaurants, CSAs, and retail stores. Register at <http://bit.ly/WNxVIs>.



Food for Thought: Apr 18

Please join us for April's *Food for Thought* film screening which will be *Food Stamped*, winner of numerous awards including Best Documentary at the Lighthouse Film Festival and Feature Jury Prize at the San Francisco Independent Film Festival. An informative and humorous documentary film, *Food Stamped* explores the question of whether it's possible to eat healthfully on government food stamps. Filmmaker Yoav Potash and his nutrition educator wife, Shira, do their best to make healthy choices at the market and stay within a dollar-a-meal budget. Along

the way, they consult with food justice activists, nutrition experts, politicians, and people living on food stamps, all in order to take a deep look at the struggles low-income Americans face every day in accessing healthy, affordable food.

The film will begin at 7:00 pm on April 18 at Café Regis, with light refreshments prepared by the Pollard available at 6:30 pm and a brief discussion following the film. Free food, great conversation, a thought-provoking film, what could be a better way to spend your evening?

The *Food for Thought* film series is made possible by the generous support of community sponsors: Babcock & Miles, Beartooth Billings Clinic, Café Regis, Carbon County Resource Council, Honey's Café, Hope's Artisan Foods, Mas Taco, the Pollard, Red Lodge Ales, Red Lodge Area Food Partnership Council, Red Lodge Carnegie Library, Sylvan Peak, and Wells Fargo Bank. The film series will continue on the third Thursday of every month through June. Join us!

May 16: *Queen of the Sun*- an ultimately uplifting look at the global bee crisis, taking us on a journey through the catastrophic disappearance of bees and the mysterious world of the beehive.

June 20: *Beer Wars*- a behind-the-scenes exploration of the U.S. beer industry and the growth of small, independent brewers.

Earth Day Celebration: Apr 22

The theme of Earth Day this year is [The Face of Climate Change](#), recognizing that climate change is “already impacting real people, animals, and beloved places.” Climate change is undeniably impacting (and impacted by) the way we grow our food. It also has huge implications for the health of the next generation and the health of the environment where they’ll grow up.

Keeping that in mind, we again will celebrate Earth Day in the Youth Garden this year. All K-5 students will visit the garden, rotating through hands-on stations where they'll learn about local food, agriculture, environmental protection, the water cycle, and more. This year we'll have the support of high school Earth Science students as well! We'd love additional help preparing for this celebration and running the stations, so contact Alyssa at alyssa.charney@foodcorps.org to get involved!

Community Work Day: Apr 27

Last spring we loaded soil into newly constructed beds, put a hoop house frame into the ground, and dug into solid, rocky ground, all the while using our imaginations to envision what a Youth Garden flourishing with life would actually look like.

Now that one successful season of growing and learning has come and gone, we need your help to get ready for season number two! Join us on Saturday, April 27th at 2:00 pm in the Youth Garden (outside the Old Roosevelt School at the intersection of 17th and S. Hauser) to lend a hand. We'll be cleaning up, amending the raised beds, adding new doors to the hoop house, getting the compost bins going, and planting in the hoop house. Please bring by any seeds or garden tools you'd like to donate as well.

The Youth Garden has been successful because of support and involvement from throughout the community, so we need that spirit to keep it going! Contact Alyssa at alyssa.charney@foodcorps.org for more information. The Youth Garden has been successful because of support and involvement from throughout the community, so please join us to keep that spirit strong!

Ready, Set, Grow!

Even though it will be many weeks before we can begin planting our gardens, it is not too soon to think about what and where you will plant this year. If you don't have a garden space of your own or would just like to do some gardening with others, you might want to think about requesting a plot in the Red Lodge community gardens. Whether you are a beginning gardener or have been growing delicious veggies for decades, it is fun to share ideas, stories, and maybe even seeds. You are guaranteed to reap bountiful harvests for your family and to share with our local food bank.

Our community garden space and number of gardeners has more than doubled over the past couple of years and we are anticipating growing again this year. Thanks to the Rocky Mountain Flower Farm, the Messiah Lutheran Church, and Red Lodge Ales, we currently have two fenced garden areas with access to water. In order to accommodate more gardeners, we have put out a request to the community to identify additional garden space in town and are pleased to have received two positive responses so far. If you have a fenced yard with garden space that is currently not being used and would like to have a community gardener or two grow veggies in that space and share them with you, please let us know. For more information or to request a community garden space, please contact Martha Brown at (406) 445-7214 or mbrown.mt@gmail.com.



Schools Getting Local

Last month producers, food service directors, school administrators, school board members, community volunteers, and chefs came together to discuss the logistics of getting local food into school cafeterias throughout the county. Forty individuals attended the Local Food Procurement Meeting, including Aubree Roth of Montana Team Nutrition, who provided valuable resources on farm to school initiatives and explained how projects have gained momentum throughout the state.

The goal of the meeting was to work together to coordinate a system for collaboratively purchasing local produce and meat for the schools. The schools in attendance had a chance to share items that they'd be interested in purchasing locally for the cafeteria, and producers were able to respond with questions and information on what they could grow for the schools.

All stakeholders provided innovative suggestions as the group addressed challenges like distribution, pricing, and storage. For while the initiative addresses two objectives that make so much sense: supporting local agriculture and providing kids with access to healthy food, establishing a system that is feasible and sustainable will take creativity for sure. The group discussed new ideas like partnering with restaurants to purchase beef, central storage facilities, and inviting farmers to the cafeteria to understand how the school lunch program works.

Moving forward with next steps we're working to compile survey responses from the school districts on specifics of what and when they'd like to purchase, as well as a price range of what they're able to pay. This information will be shared with producers who can then begin to plan accordingly and coordinate with the schools for the coming season. The procurement meeting was an important first step and a clear indication that there is interest, enthusiasm, and motivation for farm to school efforts from stakeholders throughout our region. If you are a producer who would like to learn more about connecting with the schools, contact Alyssa at alyssa.charney@foodcorps.org.

FPC Joins AERO

FPC was recently featured in the Alternative Energy Resources Organization's newsletter, Sun Times as a new member of their group. Check out the article here, <http://www.aeromt.org>.

Want to get More Involved?

Join FPC or attend our meetings as a guest if you're interested in learning more. The next meeting is April 18 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 discussion and 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 Viewing

The Good Food Revolution: Growing Healthy Food, People, and Communities by Will Allen

The Quarter-Acre Farm: How I kept the patio, lost the lawn, and fed my family for a year by Spring Warren

When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty Without Hurting the Poor . . . and Yourself by Steve Corbett, Brian Fikkert and David Platt