



“The correlation between poverty and obesity can be traced to agricultural policies and subsidies.”
Michael Pollan

End Childhood Hunger: Nov 21

One in five Montana children struggle with hunger and research shows that the absence of childhood hunger is linked to children’s success in the classroom, overall health and well-being, family stability, and self-sufficiency in the future, according to event organizers of “Build a Stronger Montana: End Childhood Hunger Statewide Summit”. This event took place in September and highlighted the experiences of hungry children in Montana, showcased best practices for helping hungry children and demonstrated pathways to ending child hunger in the community.

Ann Lannoye and Therese Picasso-Edwards attended this summit and will lead an important discussion regarding what they learned and how our community can better understand and address our childhood hunger issues. Please join us at the **Red Lodge Area Community Foundation, 24 W 13th Street, Red Lodge on November 21**. A short general Food Partnership Council meeting will begin at **4:00 pm** with this discussion to follow.



Thanksgiving Farmers’ Market: Nov 23

Take care of your shopping needs before the holiday season is upon us! Enjoy a truly delicious, local Thanksgiving by shopping the Red Lodge Farmers’ Market on **Saturday, Nov. 23rd from 9:00 am to noon** at Honey’s Café, 209 South Broadway Avenue.

You’ll find fine, locally produced products for your holiday table and meet some of the farmers behind the products you love. There will also be items for your gift giving. What could be better than a gift of food or a locally-made craft?

Among the vendors participating in this market are:

- Carbonado Farm
- Calabria Food Project
- Laurel Farmers Market
- Marty Clague pottery
- Golden Valley Colony
- Wholesome Foods

Online Course for Beginning Farmers and Ranchers: Nov 12

The interest and opportunities for small and mid-sized family farms selling their products directly to local markets are greater than ever. Consumer demand for locally and organically produced foods is high and farmers' market locations and sales are increasing yearly.

An 8-week online course starting Nov. 12 will help beginning farmers and ranchers, or those new to sustainable farming approaches, determine if a direct-to-market agricultural enterprise will work for them. Course instructor Cinda Williams, a University of Idaho Extension educator based in Moscow, has taught a version of this course since 2001. "The course gives students a broad overview of production and marketing options for today's small farms," Williams said.

"Participants learn the process of matching their goals and resources to determine what is feasible," she added. "An essential part of the class is the network developed between classmates and with established sustainable farmers."

"Sustainable Small Farming and Ranching" course webinars are scheduled **Tuesday evenings from 5-7 pm Nov. 12 to Jan. 21**, with breaks over the holidays. For more information on course requirements and how to register: <http://www.ruralroots.org/programs/susfarming.asp>



Food Day

On October 24th, Red Lodge Schools celebrated National Food Day! Students enjoyed a special lunch spread featuring a local beef and barley stew, grilled cheese with Montana wheat bread, and a popped wheat taste test. The salad bar was stocked with Youth Garden carrots harvested by the 3rd grade!

The lunch highlighted Montana grains with the special guest appearance of the new FPC grain mill. Before getting their meal the kids were able to give the mill a try. It was a huge hit and by the end of three lunch periods we had ground almost ten pounds of flour!

As part of Food Day, many Montana schools participated in a state-wide CRUNCH into local apples at 2pm that afternoon. The event was a celebration of local foods and healthy snacking in schools. In Red Lodge, all three schools participated in the event crunching into apples from Boja Farms. Students in Luther, Bridger and Belfry schools also took a bite out of Montana Crunch Time.

Fermentation Class

The fermentation class is well underway through the Adult Ed program. An enthusiastic group of new and experienced fermentos gather each week to learn, share and ferment. They have tackled water kefir, kombucha and sauerkraut along with other individual experiments. Half the fun has been in sharing the results. Yum, we have tasted some great ferments! Watch for another class in the spring.

Rotting Away in Red Lodge

The Adult Ed Fermentation Class has shown that there is a real need for an avenue to share fermenting information within our community. There is now a Facebook page, www.facebook.com/rottingawayrl.

Rotting Away is a community of food fermenting enthusiasts who share a love for traditionally-preserved, natural probiotic foods. This page serves as a gathering place to explore, ferment and learn together. If you live in the Red Lodge area or just want to join our page, feel free to use this space to share fermentation ideas, information, insights, successes and failures. We all have so much to learn and have fun along the way. For more information, contact Janet Peterson at foodpartnership@gmail.com or (406) 425-3806.



AERO (Alternative Energy Resource Organization)

By Marty Clague

Alternative might be defined as "a different way." Dictionary.com has many definitions. Number 6 is "employing or following nontraditional or unconventional ideas, methods, etc.: existing outside the establishment: an alternative newspaper; alternative lifestyles."

So what is AERO (Alternative Energy Resource Organization)?

It is a state-wide organization with an almost 40-year history of people who are studying and experimenting with "different ways" of growing food, providing food, producing energy, saving energy and maybe even saving the planet.

Eight people from the Red Lodge area went to Hamilton for the weekend for the annual AERO conference. The weekend started for us with various tours. The first one Martha and Robin and I chose was an organic farm where they also work on saving seeds for future use. They have turkeys, chickens, goats, hoop houses and a wide variety of vegetables. While they run a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture vegetable shares), they also sell vegetable starts so they can help people learn to raise their own food. They employ passive solar on a recent addition to their housing complex and host farm camps to teach children where their food comes from.

Martha and 3 others from our group then went to an organic dairy tour and got to sample delicious cheeses. I caught a ride to see photovoltaic (PV) solar panels with battery back-up in operation. The owner there made it clear he had not installed PV panels for the economics. It was his belief in doing something good for the planet, and wanting energy security should he lose power some day, that led him to his decision.

Throughout the conference, there were outstanding keynote speakers, workshops, tours, discussion groups and many informal conversations...all focused on better and different ways of doing things. Our group was energized by our weekend and the good news for everyone in our community is that the AERO conference will be in Red Lodge next fall! You won't have to drive all day to participate in this great weekend of learning and sharing ideas. And, to top that off, Martha Brown is a new AERO board member. Please look into joining AERO (www.aeromt.org) and being a part of the Fall Conference next year.

Fun Run

Food Partnership Council would like to thank all who donated to our organization through the Fun Run. Your contributions are very much appreciated and go a long way to supporting our FoodCorps program member.

Want to get More Involved?

Attend our meetings if you're interested in learning more. The next meeting is November 21st at 4:00 pm. 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 Reading

Understanding Childhood Obesity (Understanding Health and Sickness Series) by M.D. J. Clinton Smith

The Poisoning of Our Children: Fighting the Obesity Epidemic in America by Drotz RD, Keeley and Russell DO MS FAAP, Don

Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children From Nature-Deficit Disorder by Louv, Richard