

## Opportunities to strengthen our local food system:

### Things to do EVERY DAY

*Work toward dedicating at least \$10 of your weekly food budget to locally-grown food\**

*Ask for local food at your local grocery stores and restaurants*

*Plant veggies*

*Get to know your local producers*

### Earth Day Celebration

Monday, April 22 at 12:00 pm in the Youth Garden (S. Hauser & 17th W.)

*volunteer at educational stations for K-5 students*

### Youth Garden Work Day

Saturday, April 27<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 pm in the Youth Garden (S. Hauser & 17th W.)

*bring any seeds or garden tools to donate*

### Community Gardens

*Offer additional garden space*

*Donate seeds, garden tools, hoses, fencing*

*Join us as a community gardener*

### Farmers Market

Fridays June 28 to Sept 27, 3:30-6:30 pm at Lions Park

*volunteer to assist with set up or take down*

*purchase the freshest food from local producers*

### The next Food Partnership Council meeting

Thursday, April 18th, 4:00 pm

Red Lodge Area Community Foundation

*community members are welcome*

### Food for Thought Film Series at Café Regis

*Food Stamped*, Thursday, April 18

*Queen of the Sun*, Thursday, May 16

*Beer Wars*, Thursday, June 20

*free and open to the public, refreshments at 6:30, film at 7*

*\*According to the Montana Office of Rural Health, if each household in Montana spent just \$10 a week on Montana-grown food products, we would re-direct \$186 million each year to local farmers and ranchers.*



Red Lodge Area  
Food Partnership Council

## Annual Report, April 2013

Our mission is to vigorously promote a sustainable, local food system that encourages a better quality of life for our citizens, improves our community's economy and self-reliance, and preserves the land for generations to come.

Find us at:

[www.facebook.com/foodpartnership](http://www.facebook.com/foodpartnership)

[www.foodpartnership.org](http://www.foodpartnership.org)

Contact any Food Partnership Council member or:

[foodpartnership@gmail.com](mailto:foodpartnership@gmail.com) or

Martha Brown (406) 445-7214

A partner of the Red Lodge Area Community Foundation

# Two Years of Local Food Successes

## COMMUNITY

- Successful Community Forum on local foods held in February 2011 with over 200 attendees.
- The Food Partnership Council (FPC) was established to move forum initiatives forward.
- A monthly email newsletter to over 200 subscribers covering local food initiatives and education.
- Classes on preserving food with Montana State University Extension Service.
- Local showing of FRESH, a film about re-inventing our food system along with a dinner of local food.
- Tours of local farms and local bakeries each year to connect our community with local producers.
- Conducted local food access and awareness survey.
- Promoted and/or sponsored poultry workshops, book-signing events and ceramic art dinner.
- Regular meetings with area growers to build collaborative food systems.
- Well-attended community dinner from local ingredients prepared by local chefs to celebrate FPC one-year anniversary.
- Effectively coordinated volunteers to weed and harvest, thus saving four acres of produce on area farm.
- Organized the “Food for Thought” six month film series, screening diverse food-related films, with refreshments provided by local chefs.

## GARDENING

- Public open houses held in the community gardens.
- Due to community interest, the community gardens were expanded to accommodate more gardeners.
- Community workshops on composting and raised bed gardening.
- Constructed raised garden beds at the Home, Health, and Garden Show.
- Several grants received for community gardens expansion and to start a youth garden.
- Additional gardening spaces will be available within the community for the 2013 growing season.

## CONNECTING LOCAL GROWERS AND BUYERS

- Members played a pivotal role in expanding the Red Lodge Farmers’ Market, adding live music, children’s activities, and prepared food vendors.
- Received a grant for setting up the Farmers Market to accept SNAP (food stamp) benefit payments, debit and credit cards beginning July 2012.
- With the use of grant funds, new signage was designed and installed at the Farmers’ Market. The Market was further promoted with these grant funds.
- Continue an active role with RL Farmers’ Market Steering Committee in structuring and improving this vital piece of farm-to-fork in our community.
- Provide support for the local organic produce buying club, which distributes shares of produce (100% local when in season) to 48+ members. Offerings have been expanded to include meat, cheese, eggs and other non-produce items.

## YOUTH

- Hosted Alyssa Charney, FoodCorps service member, for the past two years. FoodCorps is a nationwide team of leaders who connect kids to real food and help them grow up healthy. With support from Red Lodge schools, FPC will continue to host a new FoodCorps member next year.
- Collaboration with the School Wellness Committee and school leadership to promote student nutrition, teach students how to grow their own gardens, increase procurement of locally grown food, and provide opportunities for students to learn where good food comes from.
- Successful Local Food Days in October and Earth Day activities in April organized in Red Lodge Schools for the past two years.
- Established the Red Lodge Youth Garden in Spring 2012, which has become an educational resource for the schools, the Boys & Girls Club, the Children's Center, and youth throughout the community.
- Provided elementary and middle school students with nutrition and garden based education, linking to ongoing curriculum and lessons in the classrooms and kitchen.
- Supported an afterschool cooking club at the Boys & Girls Club, where youth are able to learn as they help prepare healthy snacks to enjoy.
- Spearheaded a meeting for school districts and producers to coordinate the regular purchasing of local food for school cafeterias.