

Madison Area Community Supported Agriculture Coalition

Board Meeting Agenda

Thursday October 1, 2009 ~ 6-8PM

Location: Willy St. Coop, 1221 Williamson Street, Madison

AGENDA

- I. 6:00-6:10** Highlights from Staff Report – Kiera
- Freezing class, 10-12 signed up for this Sunday.
 - Food for thought
 - Tales from Planet Earth, UW class, how to leverage a film festival. What's on your Plate? Provide opportunities to those inspired by films, students working on how to motivate people to involved with CSA.
 - Health insurance rebates in new communities: Kiera met with Franciscan Skemp in LaCrosse, initiated with Mat & Cate- Ridgeland Harvest.
- II. 6:10-7:00** **Old Business**
- o Grant Update
 - 1. WIRED Ag. Sector proposal funded, \$26,400
 - Supporting what already doing, tweak to meet reporting requirements, motivation to put more time/effort into programs, develop resource material. Started Sept 11. Federal program filtered through department of labor.
 - a. 4 Grower Gatherings (one annual mtg, one REAP marketing) others?
 - b. 6 Mentorship Sessions
 - c. 2 Farm Field Days
 - d. Want "certificates" to be part of project.
 - Ie: thank you for attending... Pursue any other level of certificate to project that already running? Collaborate with MATC, credit or endorsed by institution. Or just give to mentorship attendees? Growing gatherings?
 - Valuable to hired by other companies/orgs, resume building: difficult to do in farming industry.
 - Who eligible? Farmers or any attendee? Also legitimizes MACSAC and work.
 - Students? MACSAC/Troy involved in academic course, ie organic agriculture.
 - continuing education credits are valuable assets
 - Kiera will pursue connections with MATC, at very least will create certificates and guidelines for which programs are certificate qualifiers.
 - 1 year, Sept through June 2010. 2 Field days in the spring/early summer
 - Partnership with REAP (subcontractor), who will do one on one with farmers interested in developing restaurant sales and on marketing produce.
 - Money for consultants, resource library.
 - e. Ideas for content of sessions
 - o **Development Committee 2nd Brainstorm** (30 minutes) (xtra sheet-strategic growth)
 - Specific tactics that MACSAC could do in order to support growers.
 - Brainstorm:**
 - CSA Guru: Marketing, planting, packing, pest management, one on one assistance, go around to farms, endless applicable knowledge.**
 - Challenge: hard to find someone with all of that knowledge. That staff person could be assigned website resource development.
 - Could be multiple individuals. Would MACSAC farmers sign up? Guru for irrigation? Would farmers have time? Farmers with most experience. 2-4 people? More sustainable.
 - Wary of becoming too diffuse, if multiple 'gurus' involved, less commitment.

-Need money to support position, not volunteer.
-Main topics for guru to cover: Survey farmers: issues that need help with.

- production related-not necessarily greatest need
 - irrigation
- Non production:
 - finances, marketing, business, how to write news letter
 - book keeping, Whole farm finances, investments
 - Personnel management, business management, labor management

-MACSAC members could access consulting for free, consulting fee for non MACSACers...**consultant for hire**, to talk to guru. Would help to fund.

-Develop **beginning CSA course**, another way to bring in funds. Not specifically production geared, but specifically geared to CSA involvement, also way to attract growers to coalition and give foundation of expectations.

-If laid out on paper, much more grantable. Collaboration with others for funding? University? Troy? And collaboration with focus on education also makes more grantable.

-Q: How feasible is this? Address issues articulated in meaningful way instead of just discussion, intimidating, but take strategic foresight to act responsibly.

-Website/Resource Development: Tool kit: Consolidated place for information, CSA template, helping with writing grants with MACSAC farms, bulk order of inputs, etc for farms. Logistics involved with specifics

-Person collecting info for website important, guru.

- Capture information being shared on one on one basis and making accessible on website. Makes website more valuable as resource tool.

-Membership fee in order to attain access to resources? Outside individuals can pay for access, vs MACSAC members covered by dues.

-Program Innovation: Specialized equipment, develop or buy for MACSAC.

-Collaborative CSAs, with peoples' ability to buy or multiple farms combining for shares.

-Guru work as well? Help to look for right equipment to make certain aspects of farming more possible. Or work with others (university) to develop.

-New Grower Support: Help with transition and providing resources to farms to help become MACSAC farms.

-Q: How to increase access to CSA farms, necessary because shares almost always sold out.

-Approaches to new grower initiatives: if goal = meet demand for CSA in area then should involve new growers. Many farmers currently involved aren't necessarily interested in growing membership.

-Trickle down affect between topics. Templates, grant writing, hired resource/ technical assistance, all to help new growers. New programs or the same? New as well, not that hard to put together if to reach potential new growers.

-Goal for awhile has been to have new growers. Easier to envision new guru, less defined to 'foster' interaction and tools for promoting new and suitable growers.

-More effort/time put in/teaching/learning/better communication with new growers/farms, different decisions made. Allocating staff.- Staff to initiate more communication with new farms, so that understand who MACSAC is and MACSAC understands who they are. Sit down session, super brief, follow up on matters

skimmed over, hard to make best decision with current process. If want quality good farms need more effort and time. –Also, further support to new farmers would change process.

-Bring to priority? Board involvement: application process, want to see marketing strategies, CSA brochure. (already a requirement). –Beyond packet, need person finding out what issues are, not denying them for those, but helping to change if so desired. Work through farm. CSA guru—if knowledge to do one on one assistance, then could fill this role as well.

-Development committee is taking in chunks, what to do in order to fill specific goal, then chase money. Vision: ultimately plan for org by Nov meeting.

○ Office move...please help if you can! Thursday 10/15 3-6 and or Monday 10/19 ALL DAY, bring your vehicle!!

-Monday Oct 19th, phone and internet at new place!

○ Committee Updates

1. Executive Committee Update – Kristen
2. Finance Committee Update –Kiera
3. Personnel Committee Update – Claire
4. Partner Shares Committee – Dela/Amanda
5. Development Committee Update –Erika
6. New Grower Committee Update – Chris
 - a. Help with outreach to new growers

III. 7:00-7:55 New Business

○ 7:00-7:40

- CSA bill legislation- special guest = **Bridget Holcomb MFAI** (Michael fields agricultural institute)

-Advocate for sustainable agriculture, local food systems, lobbyist at capitol. Senator Schultz in state legislature wants to do something to support CSAs. First shot at creating piece of legislation. Looking into giving tax deduction for CSA members. If going to be good piece of legislation, what would that look like? 1) In implementation/legislation, need to define what CSA is. 2) Some sort of flow of information. Implementation of deciding what farm and who are members, eligible for tax breaks, and how does that info get to department of revenue. Implementation needs to be better defined.

-2 options for eligibility: Just MACSAC piece of legislation. Or... find farms all over state and compile list and get named as CSAs. Any state orgs that could do that? Not really.

Brainstorm:

-Get orgs approved? Like MACSAC, Milwaukee CSA Initiative. Then orgs identify farms. CSA board, criteria, etc. Also gives farms incentives to get approved/ make changes to qualify for standards by orgs.

-Longevity of legislation itself... geared to individual tax break. What about restaurant CSAs, different models that do not go directly to household. Ways to incorporate.

-Make sense that consumer incentive, or should it be a farmer incentive? Rebate program excellent in generating share holder, though now attracting people not necessarily there for same reasons as farmer, ex not wanting to share in part of risk.

-CSAs going to restaurants water down model? –Yes, cause selling to restaurants. –So just direct distribution as CSA? Or can go through grocery store?

-Potential for increased liability for farms registered as CSA through legislation

-Could be worked into legislation, our definition. Once start legislating CSA, same? –This legislature working to identify and benefit consumers. If looking at orgs to give shareholders, kind of skipping over farm, go

between org and member for legislature. Hard to get list of shareholders to orgs? Hesitant to supply names of members.

How comfortable would farms be supplying list to department of revenue? Pretty secure, though logistics of actually doing and implementing that.

-Options other than tax deduction? (Tax deduction = %age of the amount of taxes owed, max out at \$250/individual and \$400/family.)? = Income tax deduction. Not based on how much share cost, based on income, pretty small.

-Most positive = discussion of CSA in political sphere, even if doesn't pass now education growing. Keep momentum moving, look into MACSAC equivalent orgs. Target legislators to bring together interested consumers and begin conversation, spur new orgs.

-Any legislation about taxes, reviewed by department of revenue, if huge burden on them then legislation won't actually be passed. Would need to be easily enforced, list already, audits not necessary.

-Definition of a CSA? : "a program under which a farmer or group of farmers grows food for a group of shareholders who buy a portion of the farmers' crop(s) for that season and assume a portion of the risk of the farm." -Need meaning of CSA, flesh out, philosophy. Hard for legislature, but above terms doesn't convey idea behind it. -Education tool = philosophical explanation, does leg need to include that info? -Can include "where as..." put in more info that officials brush over. -Economics, social impact, environmental impact.

Multifaceted, not just one dimensional definition of small farm that produces harvest. Implementation uncertain, but if tool to have discussion about CSAs then fill with information.

-Terminology: "grows" and "crops" implies that just vegetables. Change to be more inclusive, dairy & meat.

-Dave provided Vermont Valley brochure as example of comprehensive definition.

-Idea of DATCP being approving agency for orgs such as MACSAC. -Risk of placing that responsibility with state agency (that may not be sympathetic to Organic Ag.) Alternative= private agency, but any private could be dissolved. Would have to be state agency. -But can trust government to define and approve CSA? - Get very comprehensive definition of CSA. --Benefits to university? CIAS = mission as sustainable agriculture, vs DATCP = agriculture.

- 7:40-7:50

- Bike the Barns event report out- financial reports passed out, \$21,000 event revenue

-Farmer race next year! Betting!

- 7:50-7:55

- New Board President?

-Scapegoat to Kristen! No one wants to be.

-Factors: Time, can consider some sort of compensation? What is motivation?

-Look at structure of board, responsibilities that fall to pres, what asking new pres to take on. Flesh out committee roles. Fold into larger convo for next meeting instead of just skimming over. Make seem more manageable.

-Good for Kristen to talk about what she is doing. -Distance and availability matters. -Doesn't have to be forever... -- Require on top of emails, answering Qs, less demanding since executive committee, plus, majority of matters brought to board meeting.

IV. 7:55-8 Announcements and Upcoming Events

- a. October 4th (this SUNDAY!) 4:30-6 Food preservation workshop presented by Blue Stom at Willy Street. \$5
- b. Wendell Berry 10/11
- c. Holistic Farm workshop 11/12
- d. Annual Meeting December 12th

NEXT MEETINGS –

Nov. 11 retreat, plan on 9-4 at WPRC, may be shorter, wait
for agenda items from committee

Dec. 12 Annual Meeting

Dec. 15 –Budget meeting