

## **WHAT IS A FOOD POLICY COUNCIL?**

State and local Food Policy Councils (FPCs) are an officially sanctioned body comprised of stakeholders from various segments of a food system. FPC's innovative collaborations between and government officials which give voice to the concerns and interests of many who have long been under-served by agricultural institutions.

## **WHY CREATE A FOOD POLICY COUNCIL?**

FPCs can broaden the discussion of food and agricultural issues to facilitate a more comprehensive examination of food systems. FPCs serve as a forum in which people involved from many different parts of the food system and government can learn more about what each does. This in turn provides stakeholders with more information as to how individual actions impact local and regional food systems.

## **WHAT ARE POSSIBLE OUTCOMES?**

By empowering a citizen group to make a comprehensive examination of a food system, objective recommendations and ideas for improving a food system can be made. Initiatives resulting from recommendations in participating states have included:

- ◆ Creating a State Food Security Task Force
- ◆ Developing guidelines for school nutrition programs
- ◆ Promoting direct marketing opportunities such as institutional purchasing
- ◆ Implementing the farmers' market nutrition program
- ◆ Developing state-wide marketing initiatives to promote locally grown foods
- ◆ Organizing regional conferences and national workshops

to promote state and local FPCs.

-- DRAKE UNIVERSITY

AGRICULTURAL LAW CENTER re tizens tural s. FPC

## **Food policy councils take A holistic approach**

"The growing community food security movement, which links anti-hunger, sustainable agriculture, nutrition, and other groups, encourages examining these issues together. Food policy councils are the embodiment of that vision in local and state governments. These councils have developed projects and policies to improve their communities' access to food and overall nutrition as well as support local farmers and sustainable farming practices. Overall, food policy members translate the sometimes disconnected areas of community food security into common terms, and they transform win-lose situations into win-win opportunities to improve a community's health, economy, and environment."

"Food Policy Councils: Practice and Possibilities" by authors Leah Borron and Bill

Emerson of the Congressional Hunger Center published June 2003

Food policy councils play an integral role when it comes to food system planning. They must be visionary, forward thinking and strategic in their efforts to identify what kind of food system they want for their city, county or state, and then to start working toward that vision. More immediately, they should be working with public planners to be sure that food system issues, such as bus routes, land use planning and health concerns, are incorporated into their routine planning activities. Mark Winne New Mexico Food & Agriculture Policy Council