

Abstract for 2012 Western MCH Nutrition Leadership Network
Submitted by Patrice Isabella
Nutrition Coordinator, Physical Activity, Nutrition, and Obesity Program
Utah Department of Health

Salt Lake City Food Policy Task Force

Organizations involved:

Mayor Becker's Office of Sustainability; Utahns Against Hunger; University of Utah Office of Sustainability; Salt Lake Valley Health Department; Utah Department of Health; Liberty Heights Fresh (food retailer); Nicolas and Company (food distributor); Squatter's (local restaurant); Slow Food Utah; Wasatch Community Gardens; National Resource Conservation Service, USDA, Carbaugh Associated (contractor); local producer (vacant); Salt Lake County Open Space Urban Farming.

Abstract

Salt Lake City is committed to fostering the development of a more sustainable, resilient, and healthy local food system capable of meeting the needs of all City residents. To help achieve this broad and ambitious goal, Mayor Ralph Becker convened the Salt Lake City Food Policy Task Force (SLCFPTF) in October 2009. The Task Force is comprised of a diverse group of organizations and individuals representing various aspects of the food system who are interested in improving food policy in Salt Lake City. Its purpose is to recommend and promote sustainable food initiatives and act as a liaison connecting local stakeholders with City Policymakers. The SLCFPTF is working to help:

- Assess the state of Salt Lake City's food systems;
- Evaluate and recommend revisions to relevant policies and programs;
- Raise public awareness about food policy and how it impacts all our lives;
- Reduce hunger and food insecurity by identifying opportunities to improve access to fresh and nutritious food for all residents;
- Promote the revitalization of the local food economy;
- Expand opportunities for urban farming and community gardening;
- Reduce the environmental impact of food production, processing, distribution, consumption, and disposal; and
- Empower residents to adopt healthier, more sustainable diets and lifestyles.

On Food Day, 2011, the SLCFPTF partnered with Utahns Against Hunger to convene an informational Farm Bill Forum. The forum was attended by approximately 130 people and broadcast live on a local National Public Radio affiliate. Patrice Isabella presented on obesity rates in Salt Lake City and the relationship between food insecurity and obesity. The Task Force is currently overseeing Salt Lake City's comprehensive assessment of its food system. The assessment will inform the City's future efforts to promote a healthy, sustainable and equitable food system.