Farm to School 101 – Making Local Food Procurement an Affordable Success

Presenters

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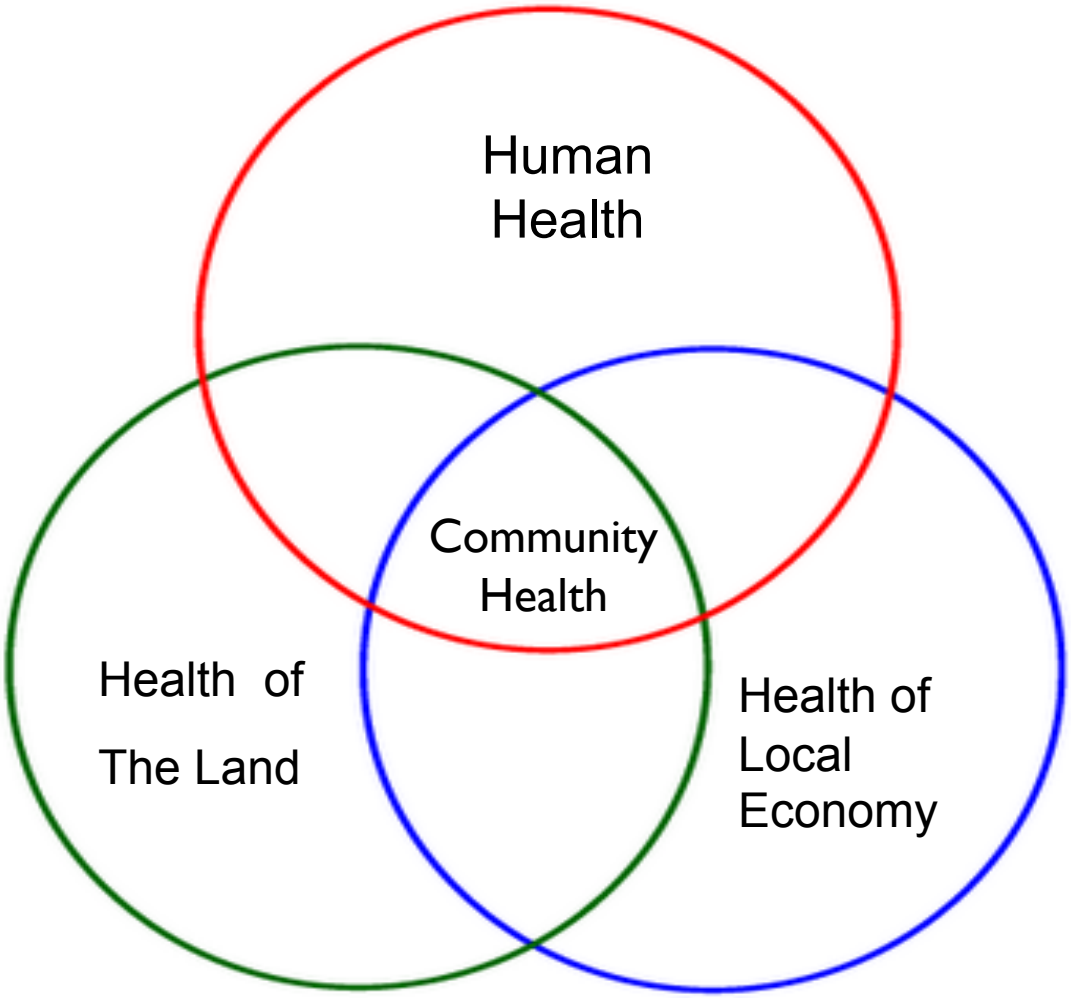
Farm to School 101

What is Farm to School?

A program that connect schools with local farms in order to:

- serve healthy meals in school cafeterias,
- improve student nutrition,
- provide health and nutrition education opportunities that will last a lifetime,
- and support local farmers/economies.


Human
Health
Community
Health
Health of
The Land
Health of
Local
Economy

Does Farm to School Make a Difference?

- Nutrition and Health
  - Improved eating behaviors
  - Improved knowledge on food and nutrition
  - Increased interest in "trying" new fruits and veggies
- Marketing of Your Program or Business

cafeteria

TruMoo
Chocolate

classroom

Irving Garden Project
For More Information
or
To Volunteer!!
Call
Heather - 567-8309

community

Who's Your
Farmer?
farmhandsmontana@yahoo.com

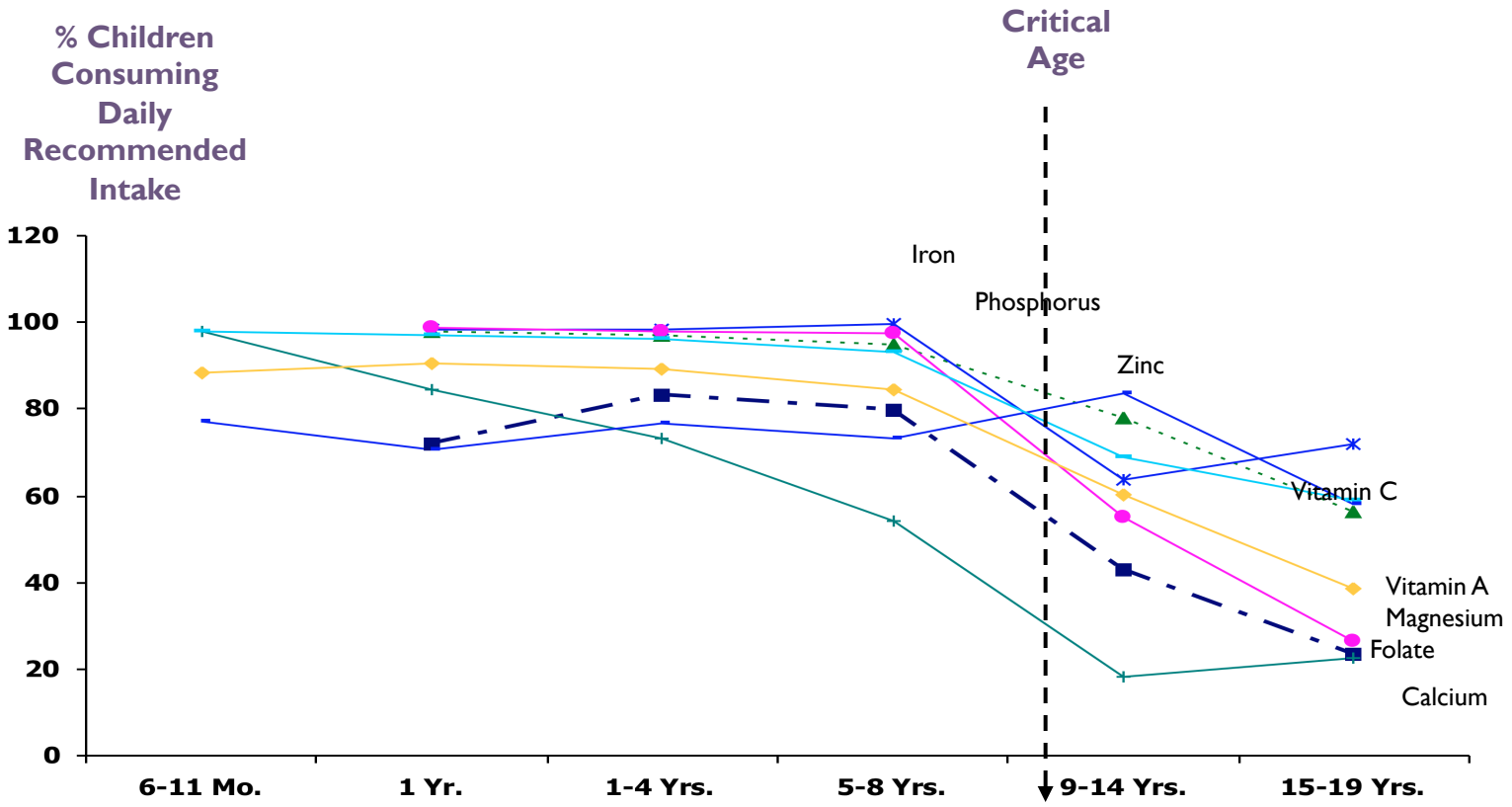
What Do We Know About Children's Wellbeing?

Obesity Rates:

- Children Ages 6-11
  - 6.5% in 1980
  - 17.0% in 2006
- Adolescents Ages 12 – 18
  - 5% in 1980
  - 17.6% in 2006

Overfed…. Yes
But Undernourished too?!

Overfed But Undernourished



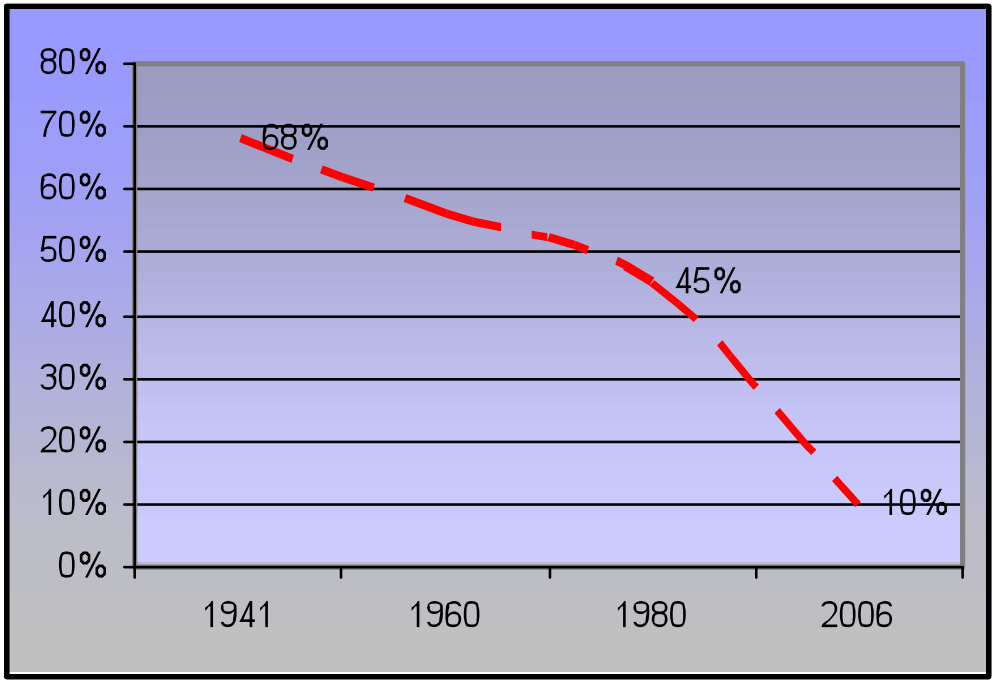
Data compiled by Dr. John Lasekan, Ross Labs
NHANES 1999-2000 and the Continuing Food Survey 1994-96, 1998

Fruits and Veggies

- 80% of children and teens not getting the recommended 5+ servings of fruits and veggies each day.
  - What are they missing?
    - Fiber
    - Vitamins
    - Minerals
    - Low-density/nutrition packed foods!

Where is Our Food Coming From in Montana?

- 1900-1950's: 70% of what Montanans ate was produced in the state
- Today: Only 10% of Montanans foods are produced in the state.



Graph courtesy of Grow Montana Coalition

Survival of Local Farms?

Farmer/Rancher Share of Food Dollar

- **In 1910**: Farmer/Rancher received **$0.60** of the consumer food dollar
- **Today:** Farmer/Rancher receives **$0.07** of the consumer food dollar

Source: US Census Bureau 2003

Food Deserts

A Reality in Many Rural/Low Income Communities

Does Farm to School Make a Difference?

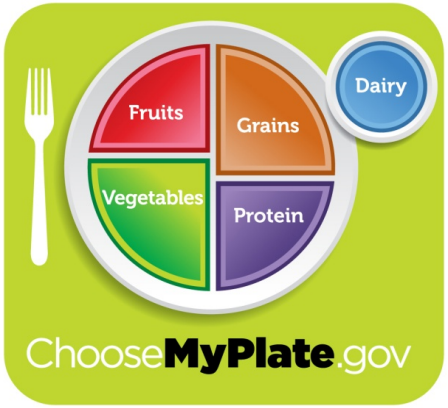
- Local Economies:
  - **March 18, 2009 Report**
    - Economic Impact Analysis of Investing School Food Dollars in the Local Food Economy
    - Two large school districts in Oregon
  - **Results**
    - Money was kept in state
    - For every food dollar spent, an additional 87 cents was spent in Oregon – creating a multiplier of 1.87 for farm to school spending

ecotrust

- **http://www.ecotrust.org/press/f2s_investment_20090318.html**

Why Focus on Schools?

- K-12 schools in Montana spend at least $19 million annually on food.
- **K-12 schools are the largest component of food expenditures among Montana public institutions**
- K-12 schools represent the greatest long-term potential for growth in the use of Montana-produced food



Unlocking the Food-Buying Potential of Montana's Public Institutions. Grow Montana. 2006
http://www.growmontana.ncat.org/docs/MTinstitutionMktSummary.pdf

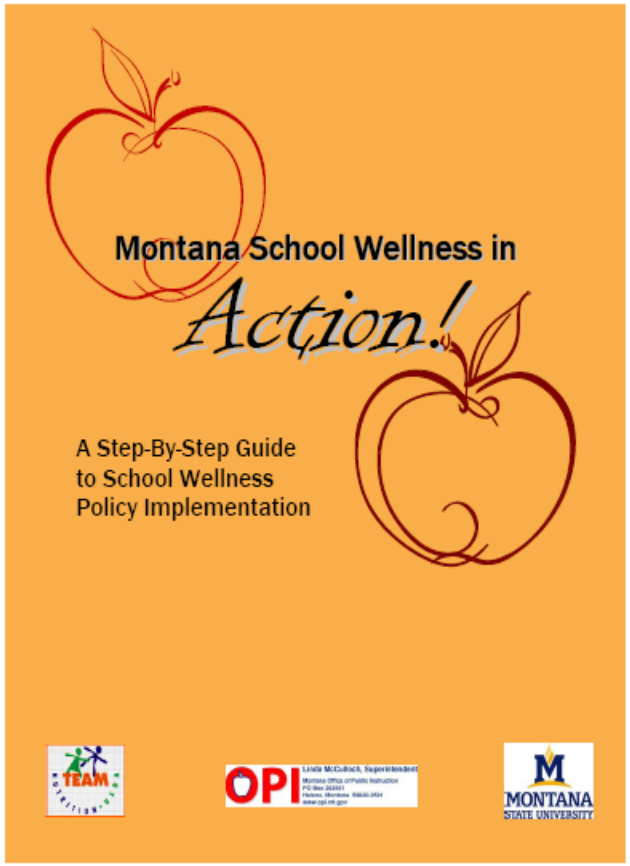
School Meals
Access to Healthy Foods for **All**

- Breakfast
- Lunch
- Afterschool Snack
- Summer Feeding Program
- New "Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program"

Programs reach food insecure children to ensure they are ready to learn, play, and grow

The Time is Right for Increasing Access to Local Foods

- Increased awareness and commitment to nutrition and student wellbeing
- 2012-2013 --Changes in USDA School Meal Patterns to increase servings of whole grains, fruits, vegetables, (legumes/lentils)



Resource Guide

Purchasing Local Food: Guidelines for Montana School Food Service Programs

Montana Team Nutrition Program - 2011

Purchasing Thresholds*

- For purchases **less than $5,000**: No bidding process is required but follow prudent purchasing practices and receive competitive bids.
- For purchases between **$5,001 - $25,000** follow Limited Solicitation procedure.
- For purchases **greater than $25,000**: A formal bid or proposal is required.

* **Follow School District Purchasing Policy**

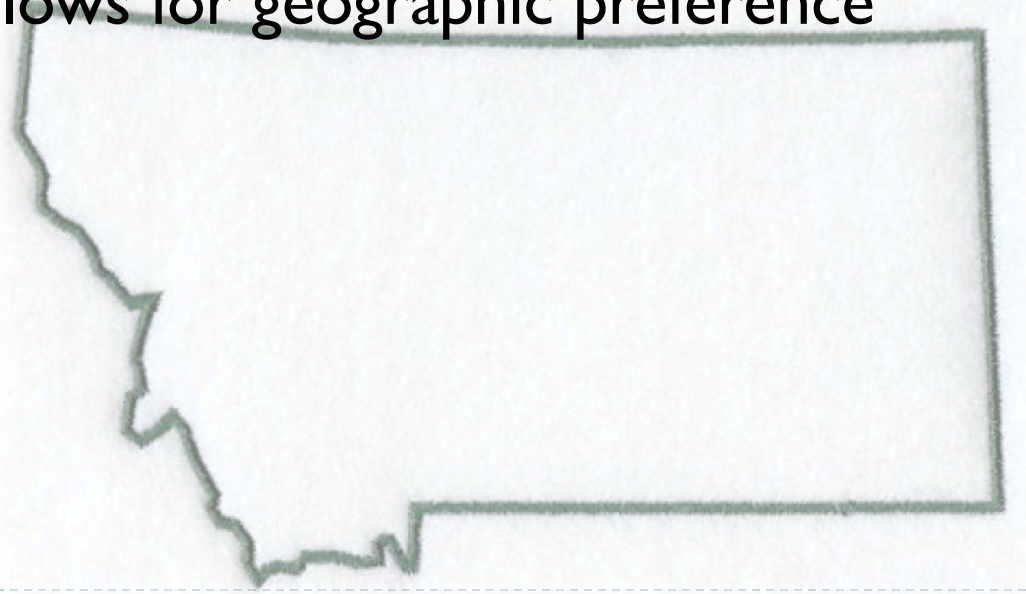
Ensure Fair Competition

Regulations & Considerations

Geographic Preference

- Allows SFAs to give preference to local providers
- Many ways to determine—cents per mile, percentage, points, or general preference
- Cannot unnecessarily restrict free and open competition.
- Montana state laws allows for geographic preference

Pages 12-14



Food Safety

- Clear recordkeeping
- Product specific regulations
- Consult with your local (county) sanitarian or health inspector

Product Specific Regulations

Produce

- **Unprocessed:** No inspections required -- Can *use Local Produce Procurement Checklist* (pages 10-11). Keep track of the source or vendor.

- **Minimally processed & processed foods:** must follow food safety and licensure requirements. *"Are you a licensed food manufacturer?"*

Product Specific Regulations

Red Meat

- **Raised & Sold in MT:** State Dept. of Livestock or USDA inspected
- **Bought/Sold across state lines:** USDA Inspected

Product Specific Regulations

Poultry *(Raised and Sold in Montana)*

- Department of Livestock Inspected,
- USDA Inspected, or
- Grower licensed under USDA 20,000 bird exemption

Product Specific Regulations

Dairy

- Pasteurized

Eggs

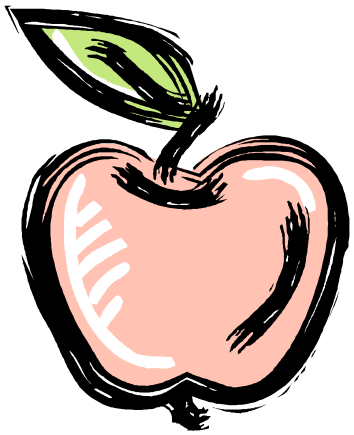
- Grade B or higher
- Can purchase from grower if holds egg grading license

MT Farm to School Successes

Cost Considerations

- Plan ahead—buy local food in season
- Consider forward contracting
- To balance potentially higher costs for local food, pair local items with your USDA Foods

Three Products



Simple Steps

- Step 1: Need
- Step 2: Availability
- Step 3: Connect with Vendors
- Step 4: Create a plan
  - Consider: food safety, regulations, bid thresholds/fair competition, how often/when you will order, budget, nutritional aspects
  - Communication is key
- Step 5: Go for it!
  - Discuss and adjust

Strategies for a Sustainable Farm to School Program

Plan ahead

Finding Local Farmers and Food Producers

Five Simple Steps Handout

Balance

Communicate & Celebrate!

Now… think about *your* menu

Questions?

Thank you!

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