



# New York State Council on Food Policy

Commissioner Patrick Hooker, Chairman

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## Summer Meeting 2008

*Friday, June 27<sup>th</sup> \* 10:30 am – 1:00 p.m. \* Rm. #250 (Blue Room) Capitol Bldg, Albany*

## Listening Tour 2008 Recap

- Recommendations as related to Key Issue Areas
- Recurring themes that cut across Key Issue Areas

**NYS CFP "Listening Tour 2008" Recap:  
Top Recommendations\* presented to NYS CFP  
As related to Key Issue Areas (1-4)**

**1. Maximize participation in food and nutrition assistance programs**

- a) Increase education about assistance programs and benefits using traditional and non-traditional outreach strategies such as in job placement offices, places of worship, schools, drug stores, and farmer's markets
- b) Encourage increased collaboration among State agencies administering the programs by co-enrolling participants for benefits and/or making enrollment more user friendly
- c) Create incentives to purchase nutritious food with food stamps
- d) Explore options for ensuring that food assistance programs have adequate quality and stable quantities of resources needed to meet demands
- e) Increase number of markets / outlets that are capable of receiving food stamps
- f) Perform an assessment of methods to ease program participation in food and nutrition assistance programs and identify strategies to address the challenges

NYS CFP (Oct.15, 2007)

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**\*Top Recommendations**

The below are a general synopsis of public input meant solely to aid in the NYS Council on Food Policy member's deliberation and assessment. This document DOES NOT represent actual NYS CFP recommendations nor the extent or depth of public recommendations for NYS CFP consideration. **This is strictly meant to be a working document.**

- Increase funding to food assistance programs / efforts that provide incentives for clients to purchase healthy, local foods (such as Farmers' Market Nutrition Program for WIC; Senior's FMNP; and portable Electric Benefit Transfer (EBT) technology)
  - Double food stamp benefits used at Farmers' Markets
- Collaborate services / develop cross-agency co-enrollment for food assistance programs
  - Eliminate finger-imaging (for food stamps application)
  - Allow phone interviews (for food stamps application)
  - Simplify / streamline application forms
- Increase food assistance awareness outreach efforts / make efforts more effective by ensuring that staff is well-trained / have necessary resources (such as forms / signs in multiple language) in community based organizations, at emergency feeding sites, at farmers' markets, schools and at food stamp offices
- Assist with the facilitation of "Farm to Food Bank" initiatives
- Increase funding indexed to inflation, for all government funded emergency food programs / provide funding for food banks to purchase more local produce for distribution

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**2. Strengthen the connection between local food products and consumers**

- a) Support initiatives in schools for healthy food choices: look to change consumption behavior of youth as well as introduce youth to food system dynamics (explore potential to incorporate farm and/or food related topics and experiences in curriculum)
- b) Create avenues for local farmers to produce for state institutions and other food service programs (schools, universities, nursing homes)
- c) Address volume requirements on buying- promote aggregate selling / buying of produce
- d) Research the feasibility of expanding local / community food security initiatives to the state level (such as examples taken from “Regional Community Food Projects”, farmer’s market incentives, Veggie Vans, CSAs and wholesale markets)
- e) Consider culture, age and geographic region of all consumers to best serve their needs

NYC CFP (Oct. 15, 2007)

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- Increase funding / support infrastructure development of programs such as community gardens, urban gardening, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) that keep local dollars in the economy and address issue of food deserts
- Establish more permanent farmers’ markets in more neighborhoods; adjust times and days to accommodate work schedules / provide transportation to other markets
- Ensure that children are receiving healthy food (quality over quantity) in schools
  - Increase funding to school meal program
  - Create incentives for an increase of nutritious “grab and go” foods available
- Increase purchasing of local foods by state operated facilities (schools, nursing homes, hospitals, prisons)
  - As fixed percentage of contracts
  - Review government procurement rules regarding local preference purchasing
  - Address transportation and delivery issues: need infrastructure
  - Establish bulk food drop-off / distribution centers: need infrastructure
- Promote / fund Farm to School efforts that can increase nutrition, educate kids about food systems and support local economy

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**3. Support efficient and profitable agricultural food production and food retail infrastructure**

- a) Encourage local products procurement preference when possible
- b) Foster partnerships with grocers to drive local preference
- c) Improve marketing, promotion of nutritious products- research models of market development and behavioral economics
- d) Perform an assessment of obstacles and methods for easing business development in NY
- e) Address obstacles of marketing retail food products in target areas (urban and rural) such as transportation / delivery issues and lack of access to grocery stores / supermarkets
- f) Explore possibilities to increase regional food processing infrastructure
- g) Seek opportunities to maximize utilization of incubator programs and cooperatives

NYS CFP (Oct.15, 2007)

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- Provide / increase grant funding for increased cold storage facilities; grower cooperatives; processing facilities; food-related micro-enterprises and incubator kitchens
- Address disadvantages of farming /doing business in NYS: high taxes/ rent, high energy costs, health care costs, competition from out of state, lack of motivated / skilled labor force
  - Need tax incentives for farmers
  - Need farm infrastructure funding to accommodate increasing demands on existing farms, for new farmers, and for niche farming
  - Need reform of guest worker (H-2A) program to meet labor demands
  - Continue / increase funding for grant programs such as Agri-Tourism
- Address the decline in neighborhood grocery stores creating food deserts
  - Provide incentives for Bodegas to carry local, nutritious foods / and for farmers to sell to Bodegas
  - Provide funding for refrigeration in Bodegas
  - Create economic development opportunities for food retailers
- Support initiatives such as Healthy Bodegas, Green Carts, and Wholesale Farmers’ Market
- Support development of regional food shed networks (growing, processing, marketing)

**NYS CFP “Listening Tour 2008” Recap:  
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**4. Increase consumer awareness and knowledge about healthy eating and improve access to safe and nutritious foods**

- a) Increase awareness of obesity and diet related diseases- focus on professionally recommended, data-driven prevention initiatives
- b) Increase consumer awareness of food ingredients, nutritional value, processing and allergens through labeling and other forms of consumer outreach
- c) Provide farmer / producer education opportunities about “best practices”
- d) Continue to educate consumers of where their food comes from and nutritional value thereof

NYC CFP (Oct. 15, 20007)

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- Provide training / support farmers on how to meet demands of local markets; dedicate resources into professional development; promote “Ag in the Classroom”; increase BOCES agriculture classes
- Educate society about the effects of childhood hunger (health and behavioral implications)
- Capitalize on Farm to School / Eat Smart New York type programs to educate children and the community about local, nutritious foods and healthy food preparation
- Evaluate nutritional value of school foods; need regulatory guidelines establishing nutritional and dietary standards for food and beverages sold, served and offered in schools
  - Eliminate foods that compete with school breakfast and lunch programs
- Support public service campaign that heightens awareness about and interest in local foods (including community gardens, CSAs, co-ops, food mobiles, school gardens) and healthy food chain
  - Educational posters / maps in bus stops, trains, billboards, Bodegas
  - Demonstrations at farmers’ market, emergency food programs, grocery stores that illustrate menu-planning ideas, healthy cooking tips, market locations
  - Include cultural diversity in healthy food messaging

**NYS CFP “Listening Tour 2008” Recap:  
Recurring Themes\* that cut across the NYS CFP Key Issue Areas**

**\*Recurring Themes**

The below are general observations meant solely to aid in the NYS Council on Food Policy member's deliberation and assessment of public input from "Listening Tour 2008". This document DOES NOT represent actual NYS CFP recommendations nor the extent or depth of public recommendations for NYS CFP consideration. **This is strictly meant to be a working document.**

- A. Infrastructure, facility and farm limitations have effects on NYS food production and retail sales *such as***
- Closing supermarkets (rising rents, cost of doing business, gentrification)
  - Seasonality of NY crops
  - Labor issues
  - Lack of new farmers / agriculture land sold for suburban development
  - Processing / transporting / distributing issues related to getting NY farm products to NY market
- B. Capitalize on / invest in community based efforts that link health, nutrition, economic, and environmental benefits together; and public education thereof *such as***
- Food Banks collaborating with local farmers
  - Community based organizations / non-profits providing food assistance information and awareness about diet-related health issues
  - Farm to School and Farmers' markets directories
  - CSAs, Farmers' Markets, Healthy Bodegas, and Green Carts initiatives
  - Example: Regional Food System Network (Binghamton)
- C. Evaluate procedures that can limit access to healthy foods and efficient and profitable food production *such as***
- Local food preference for procurement at schools / state institutions not acceptable
  - Registration for food assistance programs (suggest streamlined applications and joint enrollment for services)
  - Food assistance benefits not allowed to be used in non-traditional markets that support local economy (roadside farm stands, CSAs)
  - Labor regulations
  - EBT technology at Farmers' Markets