

# Nourishing Networks Workshop

**Calhoun County – October 27, 2017**

*Preliminary Report*

# Nourishing Networks Fayette County: Workshop Reflections and Report

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## Introduction

Each year we witness a widening gap in the U.S. between those who can access high quality, affordable, nutritious foods and those who cannot. Across West Virginia, where disparities in food access are particularly acute, many intrepid advocates are working hard to close that gap. How can we bring these diverse food access initiatives together around one table to advance community health and wellbeing for all West Virginians?

On October 27, 2017 the Calhoun County Nourishing Networks Workshop brought together folks from different backgrounds, expertise, and experience to explore food access barriers and the effectiveness of healthy food access strategies in Calhoun County. We had some fun, learned together, and used shared tools to deepen our understanding of what limits access to healthy food and what we can do about it. Our workshop advanced through three stages.

1. First we formed four teams of 5+ participants to conduct a rapid assessment of healthy food access barriers in Calhoun County. Participants worked together to identify access barriers.
2. Second the room reconvened to identify community assets, food resources, and existing initiatives in Calhoun County which could be mobilized to improve access to healthy food for all.
3. Third, reflecting on the key barriers to healthy food access in Calhoun and the major assets that could be mobilized our teams developed strategies to improve access to healthy food.

Over the course of a mere 7 hours (9am-4pm), our 25 participants collectively identified:

- 140+ Healthy Food Access Barriers**
- 38+ Community Assets to Support Healthy Food Initiatives**
- 11+ New Healthy Food Access Strategies**

In this brief reflection on the workshop we present the results of these discussions, collective analyses and strategic planning exercises. The intention of the document is to inform the next phase of consultation among those who wish to continue working together to advance a healthy food access plan for Calhoun County. Here we aim to document and represent the findings our collective experiment in its rawest format. In the conclusion your facilitators offer their reflections on the process and potential next steps.

Overall, we found the Calhoun County Nourishing Networks Workshop to be a tremendous success and look forward to accompanying you in a process of planning and action that enhances

the amazing work you are doing to improve access to healthy food in Calhoun County and beyond.

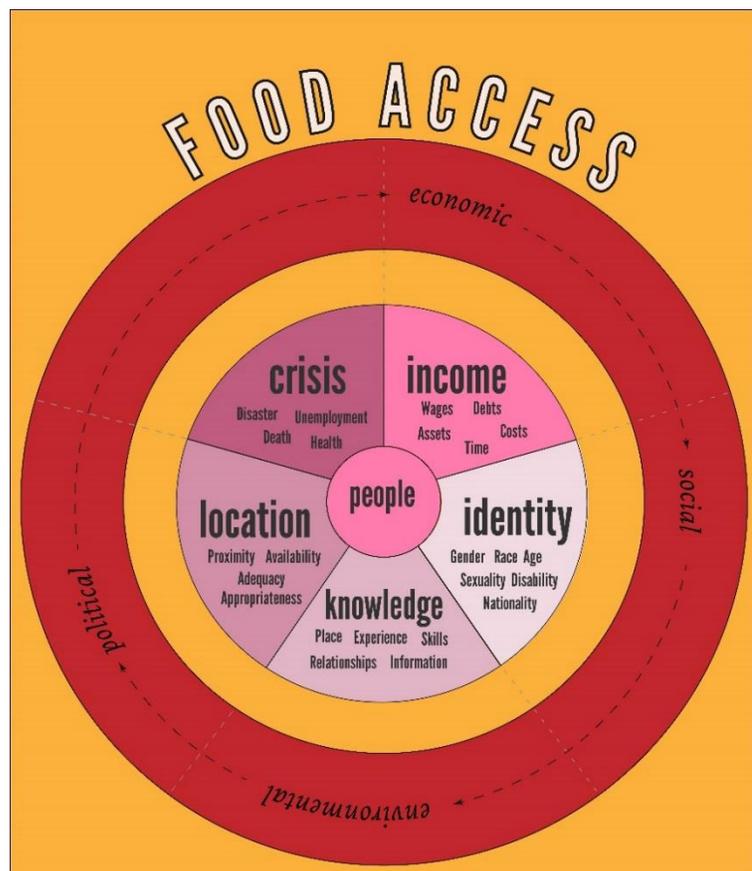
## Access Barriers: What limits people’s access to healthy food?

At the center of our concern about healthy food access is people. Across West Virginia many people confront significant barriers to accessing affordable, adequate, nutritious foods. Some of the forces that affect people’s ability to access healthy food are represented in our food access barriers wheel (represented to the right). The inner circle is composed of a series of social constraints that have the most direct impact on the ability of an individual, a household, or a community to access food.

**Income** refers to the effect of someone’s resources in wages or assets as well as the costs of food, debts carried, and the time limits placed on those who work rather than growing food for themselves. As most people in the U.S. work to earn money to buy food, this is the largest constraint on food access.

**Identity** refers to the way someone’s gender, race, disability, sexuality, nationality or age affects their ability to access food.

**Knowledge** refers to what people know, what experience or skills they have, their place-based understanding, and the relationships they have with others. **Location** refers to people’s proximity to healthy food outlets, the availability of particular foods, as well as the ability to grow food. And last, **Crisis** refers to disasters, unemployment, health issue or death that can undermine food access for an individual, household or community.



At any one time, people may confront one or more of these social constraints to accessing healthy food. Furthermore, there are a range of indirect forces that also shape access. We characterize these as broad structural forces such as economic change (financial crisis, mine closures), political change (budget cuts, program elimination), environmental change (flooding, pollution), or social change (expansion or reduction in civil rights). These indirect structural

forces are also constantly changing and thereby shaping the direct forces that shape people's access to healthy food. Environmental change in the form of a flood disaster. Economic change in the form of layoffs or wage reductions. Social change in the form of racism and marginalization. Political change in the form of cutting nutritional program budgets. In conjunction we understand people's ability to navigate these barriers to be harrowing at best. It is for this reason that there are various healthy food access initiatives that approach these barriers and help people to overcome them.

## **Calhoun County: Healthy Food Access Barriers**

According to the workshop participants, low-income households in Calhoun County confront significant barriers to accessing healthy food. Furthermore, participant observed particular gaps in the strategic efforts to improve access to healthy food. These concerns can be grouped into the following five main categories:

### **Income Barriers**

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- Food Justice Lab could include all stats on transfer incomes in the county (Disability, Medicare, etc.) and include these data in the workbook to provide more accurate numbers
- Not many employment opportunities in Calhoun County
- Many people work away, often pipelining, because there are no jobs in the county
  - The number of female headed households is much higher because many men work away- leaving their families Monday-Friday every week
- Food is more expensive now that it's restocked in the Foodland
- Land is cheap, so people move and buy all the land
- Many on a fixed income -- older populations receiving benefits
- Hospital and schools are the top employers, pay is generally low
- Older money individuals are preventing new money from being allowed to bring in business
  - A prison was supposed to come to the county, but it was fought hard by companies that employed the most people in Calhoun
- WV Mentality
- Transportation costs are very high
- Huge amounts of credit card debt experienced by residents
  - On-line shopping is a big problem
- No affordable childcare options
- Lack of internet connectivity prevents business growth and opportunity
- Insurance Costs
- Taxes
- Lots of single parents dealing with child support or raising kids alone
  - Lots of kids dependent on school lunches/ breakfasts through CEP
  - No daycare centers
- Lack of jobs
  - Mostly part time work

- Lots of jobs only offer minimum wage or a few dollars above
- Disparity in salaries
  - Hospital (good salaries), or minimum wage jobs
    - 1.) Minnie Hamilton
    - 2.) County
    - 3.) “Everyone Else”
- \$28K – average household (closer figure in group’s mind than the dataset)
  - Skewed by pipe liners in the southern part of the county
- Community County – people who work here don’t live here, and people who live here don’t work here. There are very few who do both.
- Predominantly the men in the household work in other geographic areas (in younger families)
- Single parents unable to work from obtaining a job and collecting an income
- Commissioner in Calhoun owns business that cuts brush but could hire people but is not because potential employees “can’t pass a drug test”
  - Addiction and failure to pass a drug test prevents people
- Car issues
  - Problems with old vehicles
  - Seniors being charged
- For seniors: After bills and meds, can’t afford fruits and vegetables at overpriced grocery store
- Vehicle access
- Little entrepreneurship in the county
- Few employment opportunities
  - Fewer high wage employment opportunities
- Workers in industry with longer commutes detach their communities
- Hard to pass levies at a county level

## Identity Barriers

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- The elderly can’t ride the bus to get to the Foodland- it is not a stop and is also rarely stocked. They now must travel to a distant Walmart to purchase groceries
- The disabled have difficulty riding the bus because their needs are not catered to. There were reports of a passenger in a wheelchair that was rolling around freely on the bus because their chair was not secured
- Older in age (Whole state but Calhoun ahead of the curve)
  - Loss of baby boomers
- A lot of disabilities, some legitimate and some not
  - generational dependency on government benefits
- Mentality of Entitlement
  - reliance on social services
  - people do not want to work
- Apathy is very prevalent
- Predominantly white, 99.9999999% with only a few minorities
- Predominantly heterosexual
  - Discrimination
- Clannish
  - WV identity
  - Strong divide between the northern and southern end of

the county dating back to the Civil War (North were Confederates and South were Yankees)

- North more populated
- Divide at Mt. Zion
- Social division between different parts of the county (the perspective of West Fork held by the rest of the county)
- Grandparents raising kids → drug epidemic
- Little national diversity
- Seniors not identifying as “income needy”
- Women don’t have driver’s licenses and are not driving
- The percent of female households in poverty in conjunction with no daycare facilities currently operating

in the county essentially eliminates opportunities for single mothers

- Aging population
- Some people may not access Catholic Charities because of religious connotations (hearsay)
  - Catholic Charities does not proselytize
  - Received phone calls asking if it is required to be Catholic to receive food (They do not)
- Pantries are handicap accessible, but transportation is an issue
- SNAP intake
  - Pride
  - Paperwork not worth it
  - Knowledge
- Farmers don’t have time for their own PR

## Knowledge Barriers

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- Very little internet access and cellphone reception in Calhoun County
  - Students known to sit in the parking lot after school hours on laptops tapping into school’s Wi-Fi to complete homework assignments
  - Library hours are short and odd
- People can’t grow their own produce due to lack of available land, lack of self-provisioning knowledge, or old age
- Lack of guidance from MTM (bus system in the county)
- Lack of nutritional understanding and knowledge
  - Dietary habits/portion sizes of food
- Community garden no longer running- there were reports of vandalism & the land it was on has since been sold
- There is only one family farm in Calhoun County
- Most growers in the county are only hobby farmers that work part-time
  - Farmers grow for themselves
    - possibly do not realize that the skills they have are marketable
- There is no Ag Extension Agent specific to Calhoun County - one is shared with Gilmer County

- No Master Gardeners
- School Gardens (failed, not good)
- Have self-provisioning knowledge base - but it is not shared
- People who want to farm do not have the knowledge, those who have the know-how do not want to farm
- People do not cook
- Mayonnaise jars used for canning - food safety is a real concern
- Most people have the knowledge to take advantage of the social services
  - To benefit from these services is “easy” as there are “no guidelines”
- People are not motivated to do anything extra to increase their knowledge
- Knowing how to access assistance on their own
  - People do not know what resources are available
    - Though there are Facebook pages and newspaper information
  - Self-provisioning
- Seniors don't know they can ask for another doctor's appointment if it falls on a pantry day
- Illiteracy issues
  - Computer illiteracy
  - Understanding labels
  - Can't sign names/spell
- Disconnect in information from pantries
- Existent knowledge base → fading, not up to speed, not adapting
  - Cooking, canning
  - Lost generation, don't have to do this
- Fewer people self-provisioning
- Knowledge and desire need → Apathy epidemic
- Some do not know how to prepare food or even have a way to prepare it
- “Supermarket Mentality”
- N/S divide
- “Return to the Land”
- Tool-Sharing
- Brain Drain – no jobs
- 4-H, WVU and WVSU Extension
- FFA → unknown director; shrinking; livestock focused
- Advertising → no guidelines; kinship systems; class – not participating
- Divide between organic/ fair trade → coming here? Berea Gardens
- SNAP Access → how to? Documents? DHHR
- Pop and go → no family meals
- If you aren't from here [Calhoun], you must do a lot of hand holding to get in
  - Community identity
    - Territoriality
- Grantsville vs. West Fork (competition)
  - Communities don't reach out or intermingle

## Location Barriers

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- When fresh produce is offered in convenience stores, it is often only a few select items. These items do not always sell well and often rot or attract gnats
- Must drive to Bellpark Kroger, which is roughly 1.5 hours away to get any organic or natural foods
- No access to reliable internet
- Kids leave for college and never come back
- Only one grocery store with produce that is deplorable
  - Fresh foods only come once a week and are never fresh
- Most shopping is done in Parkersburg or Spencer WV
- Infrastructure makes it much more difficult to get good foods into the area
  - Increased transportation prices from the distributor
- Residents charge high amounts to carpool
- Foodland often does not have enough food for WIC
  - Has been better since a millionaire walked in and bought the store since he couldn't buy any cheese
- Transportation (the lack thereof)
- There is no cab service in Calhoun County unlike in surrounding counties
- Bus only runs so often. If you miss it, you're waiting there with your groceries for another full hour sometimes
- Senior Center and Little Kanawha offer transport options
  - Set routes
  - Does not run to the Farmers Market
  - Does not run to the Grocery Store Daily
  - Bus doesn't run to Chloe (West Fork)
  - Bus can't go south (or reach Berea Gardens; grant-funded)
  - Expensive bus fares
  - A person can only carry so many groceries on the bus and are therefore limited in what they can purchase
- There is a lack of community gardens and community buy in to programs
- Resources and people are very spread out
- Not near an interstate → distributors increase prices 8% on groceries
- Farmers markets are not accessible working people because of market times
  - Farmers' Market → 9-1 pm, once a week
  - Distances → Deliveries → mobile market possibly?
- Those on the edges of Calhoun County go outside to other counties
- People are shopping outside of the county because prices in Calhoun are too high (due to no competition)
  - West Fork shop in Roane County because it is closer to Spencer
    - The road to Roane is straighter
- New Foodland has helped, but produce varies
- Calhoun County is remote

- Resources are concentrated mostly in Grantsville and very little in other areas
- Problems with infrastructure
  - Bad roads – especially in more remote parts of the county
- Weather in winter makes it hard for people living in hollows
- One grocery store in the county
- Lower nutritional value in conventional produce
- No nearby outlets if growing to scale
- Low population density

## Crisis Barriers

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- People cannot pass a drug test because they are suffering from addiction
  - Opioid epidemic
  - No treatment center in the county
  - Funding goes to drugs
- Health Care in Calhoun needs work
- Vandalism of the old community garden
  - Drug users were reportedly growing marijuana in the garden and using it as a site to use other drugs
  - The land that the community garden sat on was sold to put the county bank on. It is located across from Minnie Hamilton
- Unemployment and no job opportunities in the county
  - One of the top 5 counties in highest unemployment in WV (annually)
  - Lack of industry (RPR factory)
  - Unemployment rate doesn't equal people not employed in county
  - No adaptation in people looking for jobs
  - Once a pipe liner, always a pipe liner)
- Culture of depression
- Culture of dependency
- Sense of apathy is an epidemic
- Consistently in the Top 5 counties for unemployment
- Population is on the decline
- No tax base
- Schools are millions of dollars in debt
  - School went bankrupt, so the meals are unhealthy
- Underutilized local food system
- School food organization is unreliable, hard to work with, and won't purchase local
  - Kitchen staff hard to partner with
- Lack of education about pricing for foods
- High Medicaid population
- Family meal time is not popular
- Most food consumed in either Tudors or “pop-and-go”
  - Tudor's only open until 2 pm  
→ only a pizza restaurant open in the evenings
- Blame 4-year degree push
- School Consolidation → lack of enrollment
- Lack of a tax base
- Weather affecting crops
- Minnie Hamilton Health System

- Only hospital
- No surgeries, no births → must go outside of the county, Parkersburg or Charleston
- Chronic disease management
- Veterans' Affairs hospital in Charleston, mobile clinic once a month
- People drop everything for family events (i.e. births) and miss a pantry day and do not get food for a month
- Chronic depression issues
- No mental health access
- Seniors raising grandchildren
  - Afraid to make kids foster children, so aren't getting those benefits
  - Do not know DHHR will let kids be in homes of kinship care
  - Also knowledge
  - Also the label of foster child
- Lack of trust – closed community
- Until one month ago, Foodland had no produce

## Community Assets for Healthy Food Initiatives in Calhoun County

Central to any plan to overcome healthy food access barriers is assessing the assets within a given community. In this phase of the workshop participants identified many different assets in Calhoun County that contribute to community well-being and specifically healthy food access initiatives. We have categorized these assets into six asset types.

### State Assets

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- The county library has Wi-Fi
- Little Kanawha Bus System
- School system delivering summer meals for kids
- Energy Express – is a full day program that provides children with 2 meals
  - Energy Express does meal delivery in Pleasant Hill
  - Works with WV Extension and Save the Children
- Vocational school shared with Gilmer
- Catholic Charities: Wellness Works
  - Healthier choices, nutrition, and cooking education
- Try-It Kits
- Offer Snap enrollment that can be done from home (over the phone/Internet)
- WV Extension
  - Knife Skills through WVU Extension
- Calhoun/Gilmer Career Center on Route 5
- Build better relations with schools
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> largest employer behind Minnie Hamilton Health System
  - Energy Express does meal delivery in Pleasant Hill

## Market Assets

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- Small box stores are selling more produce to compensate for the single grocery store in the county, Foodland, which is often not fully stocked
  - Are more often being equipped with dairy cases and freezers
- Holbert's is now offering more fresh produce
- Uber is getting started up in the county
- Additional Mini-Mart in southern Calhoun
- Miller's Quick Mart/ P & F Grocery/ Jarvis Mart (additional stores in the county)
- Click-It Groceries
- Grocery tours

## Charitable Assets

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- At Risk Feeding
- Knott's Methodist Monthly meal
  - 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday/ month
  - Has good turn out
- Backpack programs in all 3 schools
  - Distribute about 120 or more meals weekly
  - Reaches over 10% of students
  - Board of Education is taking the program over
- FRN has great outreach, communication, and program partnerships
- Holiday help from the Salvation Army in Parkersburg
- Catholic Charities: Wellness Works
  - Healthier choices, nutrition, and cooking education
  - Offer Snap enrollment that can be done from home (over the phone/Internet)
  - Try-It Kits
- Neighbors Helping Neighbors - people donate to a trust, someone at the hospital lets the group know who needs actual help
- Gabriel Brothers partnerships
- Salvation Army - holiday meals
- Baby equipment/ gear → FRN grant outreach
- Communication/Information distribution is really good in Calhoun County

## Farming Assets

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- There is a microgreens grower in the county now
- There is an informal food co-op in southern Calhoun (Frankford Farms)
- Berea Farms - trains farmers
- FFA- both for Produce and Livestock

## Self-Provisioning Assets

- School garden at Arnoldsburg Elementary
- Pleasantville now has the money to start their own school garden
- Planned Community Garden at Pleasantville
- Community garden lasted 3 years in the past
- Culinary Classes at the Hospital
- Daisy Fryman from Gilmer County Extension (Ag & Natural Resources agent)
- Food → seasonal foods

## What strategies enable people to access healthy food?

People access healthy food through various mechanisms. While many people who might be reading this report primarily access healthy food by spending their wages in a market (grocery store) or through the farming sector (local farmers market) many other individuals, households and communities cannot afford to access food only in this way. Some of the strategies and initiatives to improve people's access to healthy food are represented in the food access strategy wheel (represented to the right).

The inner circle is composed of the primary mechanisms that people access healthy food. **Market** refers to grocery stores, convenience stores, restaurants, dollar stores and the like where people exchanges wages for food. **State** refers to government programs such as SNAP, WIC and School programs that provide direct subsidies to offset the cost of food for individuals and households (especially children) who lack the money to access food in the market.

**Charity** refers to free food rations provided by food banks, food pantries, and soup kitchens that is funded by donation. **Farming** refers to grower-based initiatives to sell produce through farmers markets and other mechanisms. And lastly, **self-provisioning** refers to practices of hunting, foraging, fishing or growing your own food. Taken together these strategies represent the dominant and divergent ways that people access food.



At any one time an individual, household or community may utilize a combination of these strategies to gain or maintain access to food. Furthermore, as this wheel demonstrates, the retail marketplace is not the only way in which people access food. Government programs play a major role in supporting low-income families and those confronting crises. Charitable assistance agencies also play a supplementary role. Farmers make important local contributions to food access and hunters put away a lot of protein for the winter. However, surrounding the inner ring again are the broader structural forces that shape these various strategies. In conjunction with the barriers described earlier these can indirectly impact people's ability to exercise these food access strategies. Economic change can lead retailers to close up shop or raise prices. Political changes can cause the loss of vital government nutrition programs. Charities may become overwhelmed by the growing need or fail to raise enough money to meet demand. Farmers may confront environmental changes like social degradation or drought. Self-provisioners might confront disease in their gardens, declining game habitat or access to fishing areas. It is for this reason that healthy food initiatives work with people to develop creative strategies and protect vital programming that enables people to sustain themselves, their households and their communities.

### **How can we promote innovative action to support healthy food access?**

Through four years of research we have observed and assessed a range of strategies to improve access to health food for all in West Virginia. Most commonly, these strategies operate in distinctive programming associated with the State, Charitable or Farming/Self-Provisioning mechanisms described above.

However, there are also some very interesting innovations that we describe as Hybrid Healthy Food Initiatives that bring together strange bedfellows and mix together various strategies to close food gaps and promote community well-being. Many of these hybrid healthy food initiatives are project-based and represent outside-the-box thinking. Mobile farmers markets, Hunters for the Hungry, Food pantry CSA programs, Double Bucks Farmer's Markets, and much more. Furthermore, in some cases, these hybrid healthy food initiatives are leading to new policy innovations that link people across these differences. For instance, the recent Farm to Food Bank bill in WV brought charitable agencies, farmers and state officials together to create an innovative law providing farmers tax breaks for farm food donations.

We believe there is much to learn from the creative thinking that comes from bringing many people with different expertise and experience to the table. Hybrid healthy food initiatives are just one example of how we can work together to imagine and enact a different food future.

## **Thinking Outside the Box: Beyond Program-Thinking**

One of our goals with our workshop in Calhoun was to invite participants to break away from existing program thinking. We all work within programs of some sort or another. Programs are structured interventions that are often funded on an annual basis, have staff, clearly defined goals to promote change and assess effectiveness. Government agencies have programs. Non-profits have programs. Corporations have programs. Schools have programs. There are numerous existing state-based, charitable and educational programs focused on improving access to healthy food. Many of these programs are funded, operate effectively, and are successful according to their own measures and forms of assessment. Programs work. Yet, programs can also be limited in scope, ineffective or they can stagnate in their efficacy.

Reinvigorating Strategic Thinking. One of the reasons that programs stagnate is that we forget that they are the result of strategic thinking, strategic projects and strategic policies that have come before. Programs have a history, a set of logics, assumptions, and parameters that are rooted in past processes of strategic planning and design by individuals and groups. These folks developed these programs based on a particular framing of the problem. Today those problems may have changed, or opportunities may have arisen. To get past existing program-thinking we need to reinvigorate the kind of energy that comes from strategic thinking, collective inquiry, and innovative actions.

### **How do we get beyond existing program-thinking?**

To get beyond program-thinking we think it is important to begin by fostering conversations among folks who are engaged in various forms of programming, policy work, and projects that address healthy food access in our communities. Second, we mobilize information on limits and barriers to healthy food access to serve as a basis for collective problem identification. Third we invite participants in diverse teams to consider new strategies (not programs) to mobilize community assets to address these collectively defined problems. And fourth, we invite participants to work together to come up with creative campaigns that advance policies and projects that address healthy food access barriers. Using a series of exercises, the teams participate in a strategy planning process that moves us beyond program thinking and toward new kinds of collective action that addresses pernicious problems.

### **What are healthy food access strategies?**

We define healthy food access strategies along two essential axes of innovation: the development of healthy food access policies and projects. These two strategic approaches are very different from programs. Indeed, as stated earlier, policies and projects result in programs; not the other way around.

Policy-focused strategies target local, state and national laws, rules, public assets, activities or budget allocations to improve healthy food access. Policy strategies can reform the way schools, universities, corporations, and government operate. These strategies employ research,

communication, networking, canvassing, organizing and lobbying efforts to create change. Usually the goal is to persuade a decision-maker to adopt a given set of practices, rules or adjust their goals to benefit your constituency. The tactics include new policy proposals, defending existing programs, consciousness raising, and coalition building. These strategies may in some cases have longer timeframes to implement, but not always. Indeed, with the right organizing, conditions and constituency (as a result of organizing efforts) policy change can happen quickly (even faster than projects). Because policy-focused strategies affect existing institutions they can have far reaching impacts from on the direction of programs that affect many people.

Project-focused strategies pilot and test out our new ideas and bring together novel resources and people to create a model, case study, or example. Projects tend to advance on more restricted timeframes that reflect their experimental nature. Projects have a beginning and an end. To evolve into a permanent activity or program that improves access to healthy food, projects must either result in volunteer-driven ownership or sustained financial support from private foundations, state, charitable or market-based efforts. Unlike policy strategies, projects can often take shape independently and autonomously from any particular constituency. This gives projects a nimble and entrepreneurial feel and can result in quick learning to be adapted to various future circumstances.

## **Calhoun County: Healthy Food Access Strategies**

The strategies below were developed in consultation among participants in the Nourishing Networks Calhoun Workshop to improve healthy food access. These strategies are a result of group consultation following a collective assessment of the barriers to healthy food access in the county and the community assets that could be mobilized to address the problems identified. Each team arrived at their strategy through a different process whereby members evaluated potentials and set priorities. While these strategies were developed rapidly, they nevertheless represent several promising avenues for near term collective action which could be carried forward in Calhoun County.

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### ***Name of Strategy: Restoring SNAP Educators (of the Health Department)***

#### **Approach:**

- Restoring Health Dept. SNAP educators and expanding what they are able to do
  - These educators were doing classes (nutrition, cooking) and working with food pantries
  - They were offering healthy recipes and letting people try new foods
- Build on existing programs

#### **Barriers Addressed:**

- Knowledge barriers

- Nutrition, cooking
- Unemployment
- These SNAP educator positions no longer exist because grant funding ran out to sustain them. Unfortunately, all of these educators lost their jobs

**Dream Team:**

- Health Department
- Health Care (in referring people to the program)
- School system
- Senior centers
- WVU Extension
- Food Bank
- Food Pantry
- Catholic Charities

**Outcomes:**

- Opening new doors for people to learn about nutrition and to learn how to cook healthy food
- Job opportunities
- Building up the next generation in positive ways
- Building Healthier communities

*Name of Strategy: Rolling Meals*

**Approach:**

- Utilizing various forms of transportation as a means of getting food to people
  - Buses as food delivery vehicles
  - Senior center vehicles delivering food to seniors along routes
  - Summer hot meal delivery for students
- Mailing out food boxes monthly to people

**Barriers Addressed:**

- Location barriers
- Transportation barriers
- People with health issues face difficulties in getting food
- Senior citizens face difficulties in getting food
- Many seniors have no family members or other people that are available to help them get food

**Dream Team:**

- Board of Education
- Senior Center
- Mountaineer Food Bank

- Office of Child Nutrition through the Department of Education
- Food pantries
- Local growers

**Outcomes:**

- The improvement of mental health in seniors
- Improvements of nutritional health of seniors and youth
- Encouragement of home cooking
- Improvement of overall health in community

***Name of Strategy: Ag Mentoring***

**Approach:**

- Ag mentoring program
  - Partnering experienced farmers with land with new farmers and young families
    - Pairing those who possess the knowledge and land with those who do not
- One-on-one mentoring approach instead of a community garden style initiative
- This strategy requires no money which makes it an attractive choice

**Barriers Addressed:**

- Not as many farmers as there used to be
- Those with knowledge and land are either physically unable to farm or are farming very little
- There is no available land for farming in the county
- There is not a lot of knowledge on farming in the area

**Dream Team:**

- Those with the knowledge and skillset of farming and self-provisioning
- High school teachers who know their students and can recruit good candidates based on interest in the program
- Young families and people who have an interest in farming but lack the land or knowledge

**Outcomes:**

- Creation of a new generation of farmers and self-provisioners in Calhoun County
- Helping seniors who can no longer farm but would benefit from this community involvement

***Name of Strategy: Non-profit Grocer***

**Approach:** Open a non-profit grocer in Arnoldsburg, utilizing gleaned products from farmers markets and purchased local goods, as well as other necessary household items. SNAP enrollment available on site. Culinary training offered through preparation of ready-made meals

from the gleaned produce. Mountaineer Foodbank can provide shelf stable items at discounted rate. Little Kanawha Bus can include in route.

**Barriers Addressed:** Only one grocery store, Outlets for local produce, access to training, transportation

**Dream Team:** WVU Extension, Local growers, Catholic Charities, Mountaineer Foodbank, Arnoldsburg, Little Kanawha Bus

**Outcomes:** New, local growers; improved employability of local people; new outlets for produce; locally owned store—nearly a one-stop shop

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***Name of Strategy: Grow the growers***

**Approach:** Create agriculture program at vocational school to carry forward growing knowledge. Students grow for subsidized CSA. Program will provide Certification (GHP/GAP, soil management, high tunnel production, processing laws, and other subjects related to commercial specialty crop production)

**Barriers Addressed:** Young people not growing anymore, knowledge not being passed to young generation, access to training for employment, greater quantity of fresh fruit in the county, affordability of fresh food.

**Dream Team:** Votech, Bob & Tom, Daisy at WVU Extension, Calhoun County Schools

**Outcomes:** New program replacing the dog grooming program at the Calhoun-Gilmer Vocational School, new training opportunity in the county, greater entrepreneurial potential

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***Name of Strategy: The Good Food Man (mobile summer feeding)***

**Approach:**

- Establish mobile summer feeding site to access communities/areas that aren't near Energy Express or can't access
- Central points
- With the mobile summer feeding, have mobile grocery store/farmers market so people can also buy/access fresh produce and staple foods
- Can incorporate Time Bank idea if people have difficulty paying
- Also, potential to distribute SNAP information to help people sign up
- Potential educational components

**Barriers Addressed:**

- Transportation and food access
- Knowledge issues with SNAP

- Salary/income issue through Time Bank idea
- Remoteness of county
- Problems accessing summer feeding

**Dream Team:**

- Jamie Mullens of WVU Extension
- FRN
- Calhoun County schools
- Local churches/Volunteer fire departments
- Meals on Wheels – Senior Center
- CRI
- Farmers Market people (managers?)
- Deanna Palmer – Lewis FRN

**Outcomes:**

- Addressing gaps in current summer feeding program
- Potentially: hot meal day of delivery and food for rest of week under USDA guidelines
- Can also combine with a mobile grocery store/farmers market
  - Helping with transportation issues
- Improving health of families and communities
- Addressing issue of women without driver’s licenses

***Name of Strategy: Making Farmers Markets More Accessible (in Grantsville and West Fork)***

**Approach:**

- Have all farmers markets accept SNAP
- If problem is Internet, get phone line installed
- Verizon would cover, but no service in Grantsville
- Finding who to help in regards to how to operate machinery
- Changing hours to be more accessible
- Identifying barriers to changing hours/days

**Barriers Addressed:**

- Accessibility
- Health and nutrition
- Potentially addressing price issues
- Growers sell out so do not care to stay longer

**Dream Team:**

- Jim Sullivan
- Calhoun Farmers Market
- WVU Extension
- Catholic Charities?
- FRN
- Minnie Hamilton Health System

**Outcomes:**

- Changing hours/days so more people can access
- Also opening up farmers market to SNAP recipients

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***Name of Strategy: Building a Communication Network***

**Approach:**

- Growing Resource Fairs
  - Mental health
  - Insurance
  - Food pantries
  - Medicaid
  - SNAP
- The integration of these
- Bringing fairs around county
- Connecting different groups and initiatives
- Reaching populations and communities that might not otherwise have informants
- Attach with mobile feeding site once a month?

**Barriers Addressed:**

- Breaking down North/South barrier
- Lack of knowledge about resources
- Transportation/remoteness

**Dream Team:**

- DHHR
- Catholic Charities
- CRI
- FRN
- Calhoun County schools

**Outcomes:**

- Getting information to those who need it but don't know/can't access
- Creating networks between groups and organizations

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***Name of Strategy: Growing Together***

**Approach:**

Get seniors and youth to garden together on the land at the CCOA for Calhoun next to Bob's Farm. Potentially install a high tunnel to extend the growing season. This strategy would get the Seniors, kids coming off of the bus, and their parents together to grow and learn. The Seniors and Bob would have the opportunity to teach Ag. skills to the students each week. During this time the parents would be able to take classes with Nancy through the Extension Office.

**Barriers Addressed:**

This strategy addresses knowledge barriers and apathy.

**Dream Team:**

- Ed Lawati at the Senior Center BOD
- Bus Line
- Traci Keeten - Community Liaison for Arnoldsburg
- Charles Thomas- Principal of Arnoldsburg
- Ag. Extension Agent - Daisy Bailey
- Minora Mission - Rick Polling
- WV Food and Farm Coalition
- Nancy
- Bob- Berea Farm
- Grow Appalachia
- Energy Express

**Outcomes:**

- Exchange of knowledge
- After school activities
- Elimination of isolation (Seniors, Single parents, ect.)
- Builds Self Esteem
- Build Community Pride
- Grow Food to Be Utilized
- People can now grow
- General cooking and eating interest generated

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***Name of Strategy: Grow Learn Teach***

**Approach:**

Have the culinary students teach elementary school students how to cook and eat healthy foods utilizing locally sourced fresh foods.

**Barriers Addressed:**

This strategy addresses the barriers in the identity, knowledge, self-provisioning, and farming categories.

**Dream Team:**

- WV Extension Personnel
- County Career Brian Sterns, Shirley Hupp, and Chef Benson
- Principal from Both Schools - Charles Thomas, Amy Nicholas
- Sister St. Joe
- Kelly Whytell
- Parkersburg Area Prevention
- Try This!
- WV Food and Farm

**Outcomes:**

- Knowing Farming
- Sense of Community
- Cooking Knowledge
- Nutritional Education

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***Name of Strategy: Foodland Fresh***

**Approach:**

Get Foodland to offer higher amount of healthy options

- recipe cards with product rollout (Nancy)
- VISTA- social media outreach
- Recipe Cards and Challenges on social media
- Veggie and Fruit Emphasis, grass-fed meats
- signage on where to get ingredients (within the store)
- information about buying 'ugly' produce

**Barriers Addressed:**

- Market
- State
- Knowledge
- Crisis

**Dream Team:**

- Steve Farrell
- Nancy Bremar
- Barb Mckown

**Outcomes:**

- Healthy food
- More food options locally
- Money into the county
- Attitude campaign
- Possibly order online