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What is community food systems organizing?

The process of bringing together a variety of stakeholders to reshape a local food system that is more responsive to the needs and assets of a community.

The goal of that organizing will be to:

– Promote a **healthier** community
– Respect, promote and celebrate the **culture** of that community
– Seek to improve the community’s **economic** well being.

Sharon Thornberry, Oregon Food Bank
Over **122** FEAST events held in 32 Oregon counties and in 14 states!
(Idaho, California, Washington, Nevada, Kansas, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Missouri, South Dakota, Michigan, Hawaii)
About the FEAST model

- FEAST was developed as a response to the need to help communities move to action around community food systems work.
- These events are organized by a local leadership team and feature local organizations.
- A FEAST convenes a conversation that leads to self-determined action plan for food systems work in the community.
- Currently, OFB staff serve as facilitators, provide suggestions, feedback and support, but do not direct the outcomes.
What makes FEAST different?

- Community self-determination
- Structured for creativity
- Adaptable & flexible
- Define & use common language
- Highlight local knowledge base
- Participants leave with tangible next steps
Community Engagement

- Broad representation of food system
- Grassroots *and* grasstops
- Meet people where they are
- Personal invitations to tell the story
- Emphasize action and local ownership
- Include the voice of those experiencing food insecurity
FEAST Process

- Leadership Team
- Community Engagement
- FEAST Event
- Action Plans
- Implementation
5-6 hours usually on a weekend

Key Components

• Intros
• Language of Community Food Systems & Data
• Local Panel
• Visioning
• Action Planning
Community Conversation

- Condensed form - 2-3 hours

- Three components
  - Mapping
  - Meal
  - Guided discussion (SWOT analysis)

- Ideal for small communities or targeted groups and those just starting out
FEAST Locations as of 2017
Siletz

- Fish fillet class & demo during food pantry distribution
- Cooking classes – help break down stigma
- Kitchen tool library
- Community garden celebration
- Partnership between community & Tribe
IMPACT

- 100+ events to date engaging nearly 2500 people
- Replicable model- being implemented in 14 states beyond Oregon
- Shown to increase community connections among participants
- 30+% of participants are food producers
- Program nationally recognized by Feeding America’s 2013 Innovation Awards

FEAST engages a broad spectrum of the community to create self-determined organizing plans.
Community Driven Process = Community Driven Outcomes (Discussion)
Questions???
Thank You!