

Community Foods Systems Assessment Project Framework

Broad project goal: Community members will collaborate across food system sectors, to foster new relationships and partnerships, experience the benefits of diversity, and lead Montana communities to more equitable and resilient food systems.

| Project Piece | Components | Responsible parties | Timeframe |
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| <p>Project outline</p> <p>Benchmarks:</p> <p>A. Confirm project fit</p> <p>B. Build a diverse coalition</p> <p>C. Confirm mission, vision, core values</p> <p>D. Define Success / Plan Digital Story</p> <p>E. Outline Research for Snapshot/ Assessment</p> <p>F. Community Input &</p> | <p>Meetings</p> <p>1: Coalition Building & Collective Vision Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction to coalition, MFEI, Snapshot - Partner brainstorm <p>2: Continue Coalition Building & Collective Vision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Asset-based food system assessment <p>3: Define Success & Starting the Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue mission, vision, core values - Define Success - Outline research to inform the snapshot <p>4: Confirm mission, vision core values & Continue Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Confirm mission, vision core values - Research manual progress - Next steps to create snapshot <p>5: Snapshot Presentation & Project Prioritization</p> <p>Present snapshot</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Present snapshot to coalition - Discussion: Prioritize projects | <p>CFSA Community Meeting agendas - AB & AERO</p> | |

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| <p>Evaluation G. Sharing</p> <p>Outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Snapshot • Project Priorities • Digital Story presentation at network meeting • Digital Story shared on MFEI online Library | <p>6: Community Feedback & Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Input on project priorities & snapshot - Interim: Complete digital story <p>7: Sharing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attend MFEI Network Meeting and share digital story | | |
| <p>A. Project Fit</p> | <p>CFSA specific:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there a group of people who have the time and interest in this project? • Access to web conferencing or physical space for meetings • Tech savvy person if community wants to create a food systems map • Team willing to manage data • Build a diverse coalition. Leaders from at least two food system sectors - consumers, producers, processors, distributors, retail • A local food leader/ project manager to engage the process | <p>Created by AERO/AB</p> | <p>Interest Form - backend</p> <p>Public facing Interest Form</p> <p>Outreach Flier - for coalition building</p> |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Decision making ability and a degree of influence | | |
| B. Build a diverse coalition | <p>Get started: Project introduction and Coalition building</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Elevator speech for AB or community members to use to recruit coalition members <p>Build the coalition: Ideally there would be about 8-12 people involved in the Coalition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Start with existing coalitions, AERO contacts, or community members already working on community food system issues in the target community. ● Who's likely to have an interest in the food systems issue and efforts to deal with it? Why is it important to them? ● Who might be affected by anything you do? ● What agencies might have a legal responsibility or interest in the issue or place? What role might they take? ● Who has influence or standing in the community? ● Who is enthusiastic and likely to have time and energy for the project? ● How to encourage diversity of the coalition and why diversity is important? ● Diversity of food sectors represented - producer, consumer ● Age, gender, race, (i.e want a youth, retired member) <p>Coalition member recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Business owners in food systems ● Producers- farmers/ranchers ● Participants in other food systems sector: food transformation/processing, retail, restaurant, distribution ● School food services and farm to school ● Organizations like a food pantry/bank that focus on food systems, food security, food access etc..... | <p>Intro meeting with local food leader(s) & AERO/AB</p> <p>Coalition building completed by AB and community</p> | <p>December</p> <p>Coalition built by January</p> |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● State agencies ● Conservation organizations ● Health/wellness providers ● Extension/SNAP-Ed ● Eaters/consumers | | |
| C. Confirm Mission, Vision, Core Values | See Meetings 2 & 3 Agendas | | |
| D. Define Success / Plan Digital Story | <p>How to define success: Project outcomes, Monitor and evaluate progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Who will the project benefit? ● How does the project benefit the community? Does it change a system? ● How will the project serve future generations/continue without AERO support and be a model to other communities? ● What does success look like, and how will we measure? ● Create project objectives - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SMART objectives, Objectives with focus to drive quick project success ● System Evaluation- Measure changes in awareness, skills, knowledge & attitudes across spectrum (individ, orgs/groups, & systems (community, policy)) through reflective surveys or observation for folks directly | | |

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| | <p>participating in the MFEI project and indirectly affected populations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Success measures: Indicators of progress for short term (3-6 mths) and longer term (what is appropriate for this engagement?) ● What will the anticipated outcomes be? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ more and better cross-sector food system relationships, ○ build a statewide network of local food leaders / MFEI project participants ● Theory of change - what specific activities and outputs will help this project be sustainable. ● Sustainability - will this project continue to function once this time period end? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If so, what is needed to ensure that? <p>Stakeholder Analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Who will be impacted by the project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Categories of stakeholders ● How will they be involved in the project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How will they be engaged to foster local ownership and sustainability ● How will they influence the project's success <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Importance of influence <p>Digital Storytelling framing</p> | | |
| E. Research | Research: Assess the current situation, Data Gathering, Action planning | | |

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| | <p>Data Gathering What does the coalition need to know about the community in order to implement the project?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What is the community already doing related to the project and is there a way to piggyback on current work? ● General asset-based assessment at first-ish meeting ● Community members /team /coalition as experts on what data is needed from each asset / sector area. Eg. pull existing reports, interview, talk with an organization ● Determine what other data is needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Primary data - interviews, community surveys, community town hall ○ Secondary data - city demographic information <p>Action Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Create an action plan for how data will be gathered and who will do that. ● What resources are needed for action steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Funding, staff time, space needs, supplies, technology, equipment, key partner) | | |
| <p>F. Community Input & Evaluation</p> | <p>Examples of some evaluation metrics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● # coalition members engaged ● # of organizations engaged ● # of public input/touchpoints ● Increase Coalition members and community's understanding of the local food system (sectors / asset areas) | | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● New relationships/connections between FS sectors (or working with one another in new ways) ● Project ideas and prioritization in preparation of Phase 2 work ● Reflections of change in knowledge about the food system infrastructure/sectors and assets in one's community ● Reflections on change in access to local food and community production ● # of people affected ● # of people who are planning to use - i.e biochar ● # of volunteers engaged ● # of volunteer hours ● # of people and organizations represented and the diversity of the group <p>Evaluation questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Did you create a new relationship? ● Did you create a new way of working with a current relationship? | | |
| G. Sharing | <p>Wrapping up: Communication and celebration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Who needs to know about the project success? ● How will this information be shared? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What resources are needed to share? ● Lessons learned - what do other communities need to know if they try to implement this type of project ● Next steps - will there be more work with the coalition? Will the coalition end or continue to meet? | | |

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| | For CFSA - Will the coalition move forward to do an actual assessment and create a food systems map? | | |
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