

The role of public health professionals in Oregon's community food systems movement

MODERATOR/DISCUSSANT: Lauren Gwin

PANELISTS: Jessica Linnell, Robin Maille, Caryn Wheeler

TOPIC/TARGET AUDIENCE: Our target audience includes public health professionals who have an interest in community food systems as an integrated framework to improve economic, social, and environmental health through community-level collaboration. We argue that drawing the large

ABSTRACT: Across Oregon people and organizations are coming together to tackle public health, environmental, and economic challenges related to the food system, as part of the integrated “community food systems” (CFS) movement. Public health professionals have an essential role in this movement because of their population-level approach and systems-thinking. In this presentation, we briefly describe how Oregon State University (OSU) Extension is evolving to meet these complex, interwoven challenges through participation and leadership in collaborations that include the Extension Community Food Systems Community of Practice and the Oregon Community Food Systems Network. We share three examples of how OSU public health extension faculty members are engaging with CFS efforts in their geographically and demographically diverse regions: Northeastern Oregon, Southern Oregon, and the North Coast. Their experiences demonstrate the importance of connecting the dots across Extension's different food systems-related expertise and programs, as well as the value of engagement with nonprofit partners. In addition, they show how complex food systems problems can be, and why a public health lens is so useful. Through community engagement in the food systems discussion we are more likely to identify sustainable, knowledge-based solutions to our food system issues.

OBJECTIVE(S): Session participants will be able to: Define “community food systems”; identify specific public health challenges that community food systems efforts and organizations aim to address; describe, in general terms, the role of public health professionals in the community food systems movement; describe specific examples of how OSU Extension public health faculty members are engaged in community food systems efforts in different regions of the state.

PANEL ABSTRACT 1: This presentation, focused on Oregon's North Coast (Tillamook and Lincoln Counties) will provide the first of our panel's three regional examples of the role of public health professionals in the community food systems movement. The presenter, who is one of OSU's new Health Extension faculty, will describe food systems-related challenges in the region, CFS-related activities and collaborations, and future opportunities.

PANEL ABSTRACT 2: This presentation, focused on Northeastern Oregon (Union and Baker Counties) will provide the second of our three regional examples, using a similar format, while pointing out key regional differences. This presenter will also reflect on her close involvement with the Community Food Assessment for the two counties, led by Oregon Food Bank.

PANEL ABSTRACT 3: Our final presentation, focused on Southern Oregon (Jackson and Josephine Counties) provides the third regional example, again with a similar format while

identifying key differences. This presenter will also reflect on her close involvement with the two-county regional food system network.

PRIMARY CONTACT INFORMATION:

Lauren Gwin, PhD

Extension Community Food Systems Specialist/Associate Director/Assistant Professor

OSU Center for Small Farms & Community Food Systems

lauren.gwin@oregonstate.edu

CO-PRESENTER(S) CONTACT INFORMATION:

Jessica Linnell | jessica.linnell@oregonstate.edu

Robin Maille | robin.maille@oregonstate.edu

Caryn Wheeler | caryn.wheeler@oregonstate.edu

MODERATOR CONTACT INFORMATION: Lauren Gwin | lauren.gwin@oregonstate.edu