



# DANE COUNTY FOOD COUNCIL

## ANNUAL REPORT 2007

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Dane County Food Council  
City-County Building, Room 116  
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In 2007, our second year, the Food Council continued to build support for a sustainable local food system in the Dane County region. The Council pursued its goals through four subcommittees and focused on fundraising for projects and staffing. In addition to the accomplishments listed below, the Food Council was codified into Dane County Ordinance (chapter 15) and a resolution was passed allowing the Council to accept donations.

We invited nine guest speakers to give presentations on a variety of topics, and drew from the wide base of local, state and national knowledge of food issues on the part of Food Council members and our community partners. We would like to thank our many volunteers, staff in the Dane County Planning and Development Department, and Lee Cunningham (Dane County-UW Extension Department Head) for helping us work toward our mission.

### **Institutional Food Purchasing Subcommittee**

The Subcommittee worked with county purchasing staff to author and approve the "Local Food Purchase Policy" which was adopted by the Dane County Board of Supervisors as Resolution 257, 06-07. The policy encourages Dane County to explore options for purchasing and serving locally produced foods in the County's food service facilities. By partnering with the Institutional Food Market Coalition, Consolidated Food Service sourced more than 7,500 lbs. of fruits and vegetables between July and October 2007 through a pilot program with the Badgerland Produce Auction. Additionally, Consolidated Food Service now encourages local products through its bid process, asking providers to track and report locally sourced items. The Food Council also assisted Center Plate Catering at the Alliant Energy Center in sourcing the meal from local farms and bakeries for the Food Council's first annual conference on March 26<sup>th</sup>.

### **Farmers Market Network Subcommittee**

The Farmers Market Network Subcommittee met monthly throughout the year to develop goals for future program ideas. The Subcommittee focused much of its effort on supporting the development of the Farmers Market Alliance for South Central Wisconsin- a grassroots organization dedicated to the establishment, maintenance, and expansion of farmers markets in the region. In 2008, the Alliance plans to address event planning, market management, tips for customers about using fresh foods at home, a newsletter, website, and partnership development. Increasing the number of markets with an Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) machine that can accept the Quest food stamp card (as well as debit cards) stands out as a priority issue. The group is working to raise funds to support a mini-grants program for area markets to purchase machines and set up program infrastructure. This type of program can simultaneously increase access to fresh fruits and vegetables for low-income people and strengthen markets for local farm products, a win-win situation.

## Market Basket Subcommittee

The Subcommittee continued to support the expansion of the Market Basket program in Dane County by partnering with Madison community organizations to develop drop site locations. The sites provide volunteers who coordinate local distribution and leverage dollars spent on other program costs and staffing. The Market Basket Subcommittee has set a long-term goal of distributing 250 baskets per month. The program has appeal to many different groups, with its weekly options for seniors (half basket), an organic box, and a box tailored to the food preferences of the Latino population. In 2007, the Subcommittee worked with two volunteers, added several drop sites, strengthened and streamlined the distribution process, and submitted a number of grant proposals for program support.

## Education and Outreach Subcommittee

The Subcommittee organized the first *Planting Seeds for Our Future* conference on March 26<sup>th</sup> at the Alliant Energy Center, with more than 150 people attending. A morning panel presentation focused on the social, environmental, and economic linkages within the Dane County Food System. A lunchtime awards ceremony then honored more than 20 local individuals and organizations (nominated by our community). Afterwards, more than fifteen afternoon workshop sessions engaged participants in steps toward future action on a range of topics (i.e. school food, food waste, lake fish as a food source, new immigrant farming, federal and state policy). The Food Council also heard from attendees about specific ways the Council can help with their work.

Thanks to the Subcommittee's efforts, the Food Council was recognized as a finalist in the National Association of Counties (NACO) Sustainable Community Awards program, and was also highlighted by NACO as a model program in the publication, "Counties and Local Food Systems: Ensuring Healthy Foods, Nurturing Healthy Children." The Subcommittee also engaged with the public by participating in more than 10 outreach events and community presentations.

## Plans for 2008

The Dane County Food Council will continue to move forward with the four existing Subcommittees in 2008. Anticipated new developments and events include:

- A new Dane County-UW Extension Food System Coordinator position will provide staff support to the Food Council.
- The Food Council plans to partner with other groups to co-sponsor an event focused on hunger, nutrition, and food access issues sometime during 2008.
- The Community Food Security Coalition will offer a Midwest regional training for emerging food policy councils on February 29<sup>th</sup>-March 1<sup>st</sup> in Milwaukee, with the Dane County Food Council as a facilitator and co-sponsor.

In 2008, Food Council meetings will be held on the fourth Monday of each month, from 6:30-8:30p.m. Please join the listserv to receive notices about upcoming meetings and events by viewing our website at [www.co.dane.wi.us/foodcouncil](http://www.co.dane.wi.us/foodcouncil).

### Members pictured:

(top row from left) Dale Secher, Jerry Kaufman, Martin Bailkey, Richard Slone, Gerry Campbell, (middle row) Judy Hageman, (bottom row from left) Ken Ruegsegger, Jane Voichick, Ruth Simpson, and Lisa Wiese.

Photo taken by Mark Dohm.



## DANE COUNTY FOOD COUNCIL

### Our Mission

To explore issues and develop recommendations to create an economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable local food system for the Dane County region.

### Members

Martin Bailkey  
*Vice Chair*

Jerry Bradley

Gerry Campbell

Judy Hageman

Jerry Kaufman

Robert Pierce

Ken Ruegsegger

Dale Secher

Ruth Simpson  
*Chair*

Richard Slone

Jane Voichick

Lisa Wiese

### Staff

Majid Allan

Dawn Burgardt