

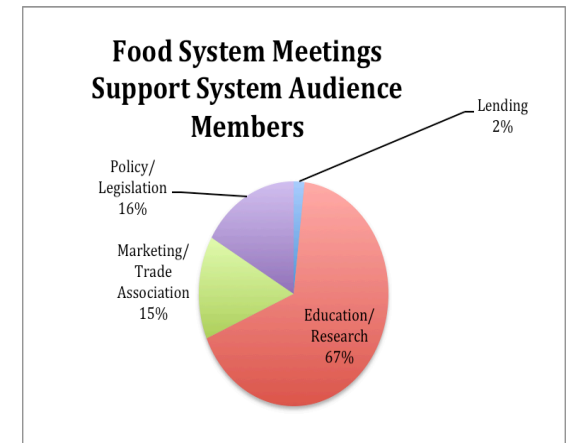
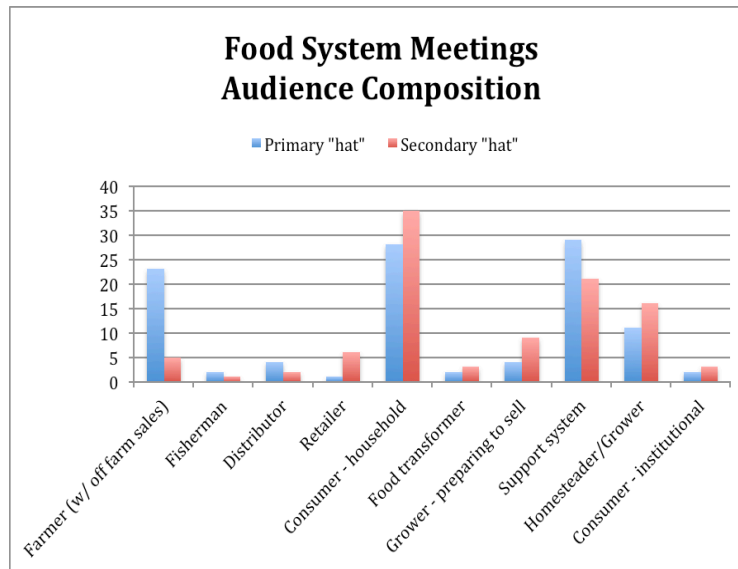
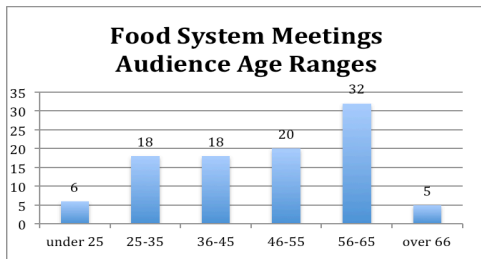
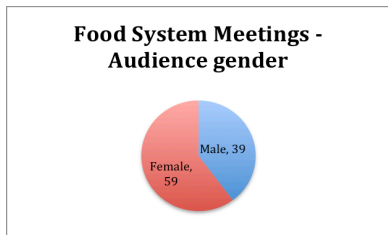
# Spring 2013 Discussion Series on Washington County's Food System - Summary

Organized and convened by Washington County: One Community and GROWashington-Aroostook



In the spring of 2013, Washington County: One Community's Farm to School Coordinator was contracted to co-convene a series of meetings on the county's food system in conjunction with the GROWashington-Aroostook Regional Planning initiative. Five meetings were held in Cherryfield, Machias, Eastport, Calais and Princeton. Results and responses were collated and are being compared with previously completed studies and data. At the meetings, a total of 117 attendees provided input via both instapolling devices and open discussion after a slideshow presentation on Washington County's Food System. Additionally, initial results will be shared with community members who were under-represented at the meeting.

Poll questions asked the gender and age range of participants and their primary and secondary "hats" as they participated in the discussion. If people identified themselves as part of the Local Food Support System, a question asked the type of that support- all responses are described in the following charts.

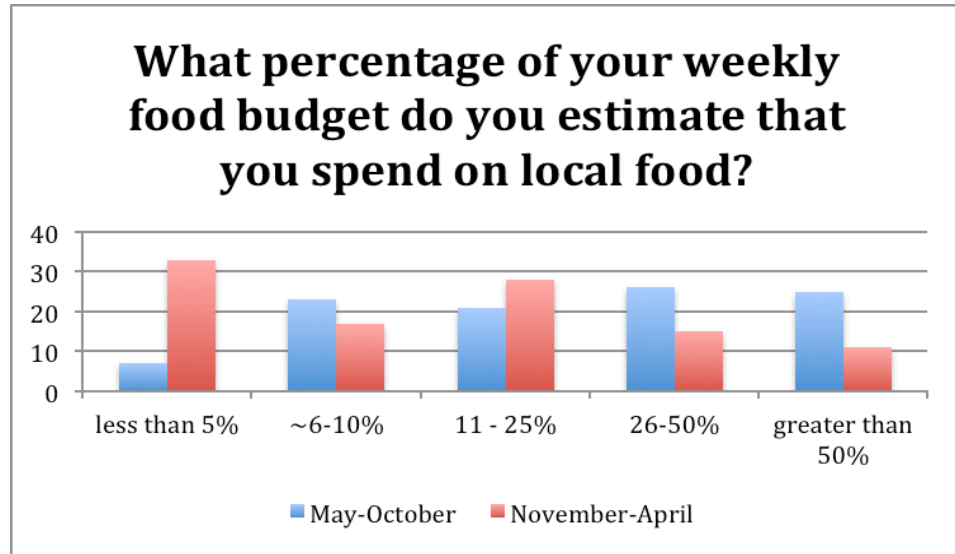
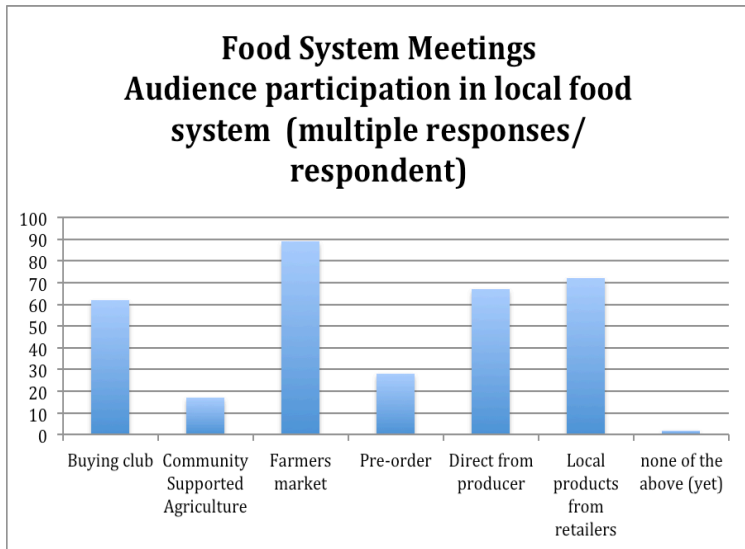


Under-represented sectors in the food system meetings included financial lenders, large agri-producers, fishermen, distributors, processors, retailers, and institutional purchasers. Attendees could be characterized as having an above average

## Spring 2013 Discussion Series on Washington County's Food System - Summary

Organized and convened by Washington County: One Community and GROWashington-Aroostook

interest in the local food system and a strong interest in supporting the education and research to make it stronger and economically viable.



Given the preponderance of small-scale food producers and consumers of local food in the audience, it is not surprising that many participate in multiple ways to obtain local food. This dedication is also reflected in the percentage of their weekly food budget spent on local food. As you would expect, the weekly food budget spent on local food decreases in the winter months *indicating that there is a market for value-added products, storage crop and extended-season production.*

In addition to the insta-polling input, the 5 meetings were structured to develop a vision for the food system in Washington County when looking 10 years into the future. This exercise yielded vision statements for a food system in Washington County that is both self-sufficient and economically viable. The next exercise asked the audience “how do we get there from here”? The following tables describe the gaps and needs of our local food system, suggested next steps, and necessary stakeholders. It is organized according to whether the needs, gaps and next steps relate to:

- Production inputs
- Production
- Support Systems
- Processing
- Food Access
- Distribution
- Waste Management

## Spring 2013 Discussion Series on Washington County's Food System - Summary

Organized and convened by Washington County: One Community and GROWashington-Aroostook

Finally, audience members identified the types of workshops they would attend (and their preferred time and location) if offered by the Extension Service or the Sunrise County Farmers Alliance. Those results are summarized in Appendix A.

### Food System Gaps and Next Steps

*Gaps and Needs are listed in order of priority according to the number of times they were mentioned by participants and the input obtained by additional questions from the insta-polling questions.*

*Gaps and needs that are both high priority and pose the highest potential to leverage growth in the Washington County Food System are noted in red print.*

| Category          | Identified Gap/Need  | Suggested Next Steps   | Possible Stakeholders                                   |
|-------------------|--|--|---|
| Production Inputs | Increased <b>access</b> to inputs: animal and fish feed, seed, livestock, supplies, tools, equipment and equipment repair, fishing and farming supplies, compost | Identify the most needed items   | Producers and fishermen                                 |
|                   |  | Identify local businesses that could easily stock more ag and fishery products | Hardware stores, feed and seed stores, buying club hubs |
|                   | Increased number of young farmers farming various scale farms  | Identify factors that would attract farming families                           | SCEC?   |
|                   |  | Develop comprehensive plan to attract new producers                            | SCEC?   |

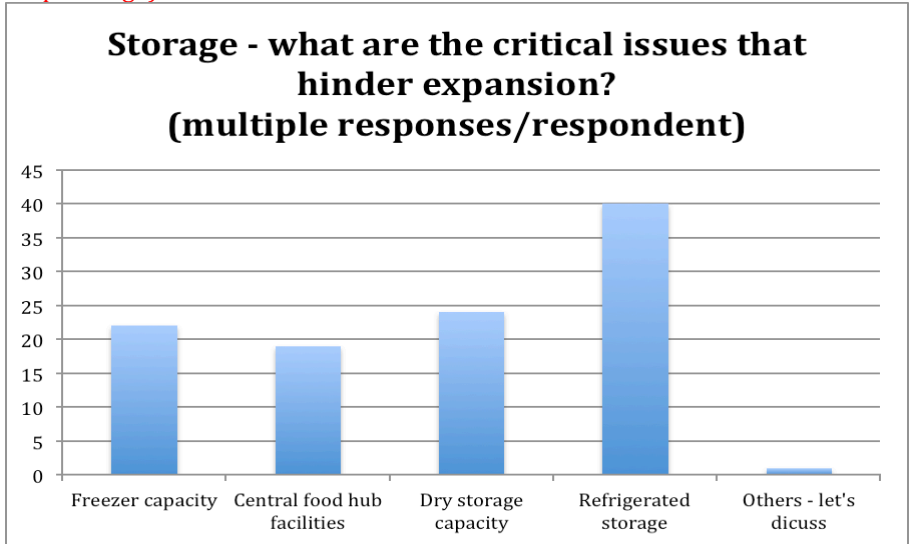
**Critical mass of growers - how do we support/attract new and/or expanded production?  
(multiple responses/respondent)**

| Program                                 | Number of Responses |
|---|---------------------|
| Mentoring program for new farmers       | 32                  |
| Producer grant/loan program             | 45                  |
| Coordinated County-wide support network | 45                  |
| Market research                         | 22                  |
| Others, lets discuss                    | 2                   |

## Spring 2013 Discussion Series on Washington County's Food System - Summary

Organized and convened by Washington County: One Community and GROWashington-Aroostook

| Category          | Identified Gap/Need  | Suggested Next Steps  | Possible Stakeholders  |
|-------------------|--|---|--|
|                   | Stronger Canadian connections and brokering systems  | Contact NB ag and fishery connections to share common needs                                       | Canadian Organic Growers, Organic Crop Inspection Association, Govt entities |
|                   | Labor pool incorporating community service from schools, jails, nursing and veteran homes  | Identify local partner to pilot effort  | County jail, school superintendents/principals, veteran home, food pantries  |
|                   | Affordable health insurance for farmers  | Local agency/organization to pick up for growers  | Hospital, FSA, SCEC  |
| <b>Production</b> | Increased season extension and year round production – greenhouses, high tunnels, row covers, aquaponics in schools/institutions, and residential        | Educational workshops on season extension   | Extension? FTS   |
|                   | Larger percentage of homeowners producing food for themselves.   | Educational workshops on home production  | Extension?   |
|                   | Shared equipment/machinery/tools   | Identify via survey commonly needed equipment   | Producers, fishermen, equipment dealers                                      |
|                   |  | Facilitate a pilot WC program like MOFGA's  | MOFGA, FSA, equipment dealers  |
|                   | Energy efficient storage systems for producers, distributors, schools/institutions (larger walk ins, and freezers) and homeowners (winter crop storage). | Food hub location, funding, operator<br>Identify a school partner interested in developing system | Me Food Strategy's Cool Cache resource                                       |
|                   | Locate funding stream  | MCF, USDA Rural Business grants, others?  |  |



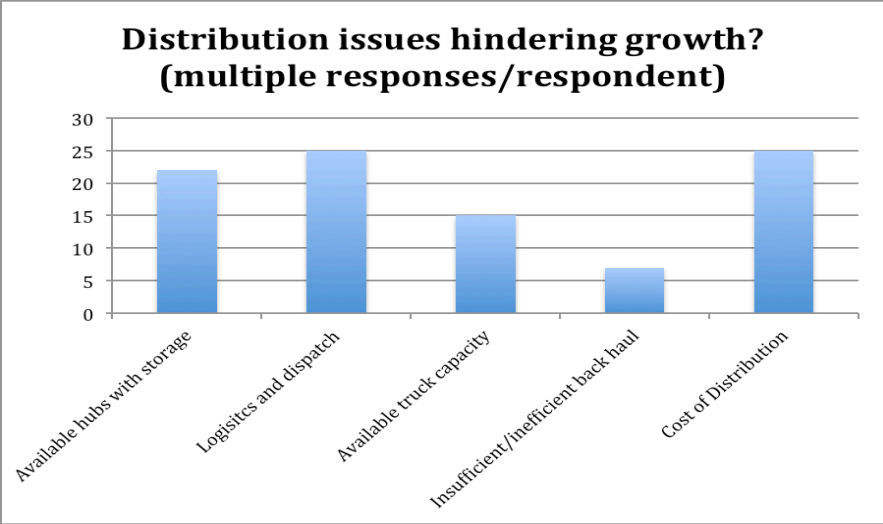
## Spring 2013 Discussion Series on Washington County's Food System - Summary

Organized and convened by Washington County: One Community and GROWashington-Aroostook

| Category           | Identified Gap/Need  | Suggested Next Steps   | Possible Stakeholders   |
|--------------------|--|--|---|
|                    | Transition of available farmland to new farmers  | Conversations with land trusts and landowners to develop strategy  | Maine Farmland Trust, Downeast Coastal Conservancy, landowners                      |
|                    | Increased number of school and community veg and fruit gardens   | Incredible Edible Milbridge monitoring for replication   | Milbridge community organizers, Women's Resource Center                             |
|                    | Labor pool for producers- workers, volunteers, apprentice programs and community connections for kids to work and be at farms  | Modify existing SCFA google doc listing producers and their summer labor needs                           | SCFA  |
|                    | Wider soil fertility knowledge including access to effective soil testing  | Educational programs on soil fertility   | Mark Fulford, Extension   |
|                    | Schools and institutions prioritizing local products first using incentives and then purchasing outside of the region  | State initiative? Local food fund financing  | Legislators?  |
|                    | Energy (discussion of historical perspective): more draft animals, biodiesel from animal and wood based resources, coppicing and pollarding  | Producer workshops on alternative power sources  |   |
|                    | Vibrant and diverse fishery  | Collaborate with fishermen on needs and common goals   | Fishermen's associations, producer groups, Will Hopkins                             |
| <b>Processing</b>  | Export of more locally processed value-added products such as seafood and other niche market opportunities such as medical marijuana (ex, Maine Fresh, Blueberry Value-Added Juice facility) | Feasibility study of market demand for local product   | MIT, CCLC, CBRC   |
|                    |  | Locate funding and/or financiers for facility construction/renovation                                    | MIT, CCLC, CBRC   |
|                    | Commercial kitchen availability for producers (grain mill, value added processing)   | Support efforts at CBRC as pilot system  | CBRC,SCEC   |
| <b>Food Access</b> | Availability of transportation for low-income residents to food/transport of food to residents   | Identify transportation needs  | WCOC, WCCOG   |
|                    | Expand flexibility of SNAP benefit access to all farm markets and buying clubs as well as offer work trades in exchange for benefits (WIC is accessible but not EBT)                         | Provide SNAP benefit machines to all WC Farmer's Markets and support buying clubs with becoming eligible | WCOC, buying clubs, farmers markets   |
|                    | Local food available in conventional grocery stores as well as through food delivery systems   | Producers need GAP certification for Hannafords (IGA?)   | Marie Emerson was working on an alternative certification for small-scale producers |
|                    | Schools/institutions/nursing homes/veteran homes/jails can be food production sites  | Identify local partners county-side  | FTS, WCOC, schools and institutions, county jail,                                   |

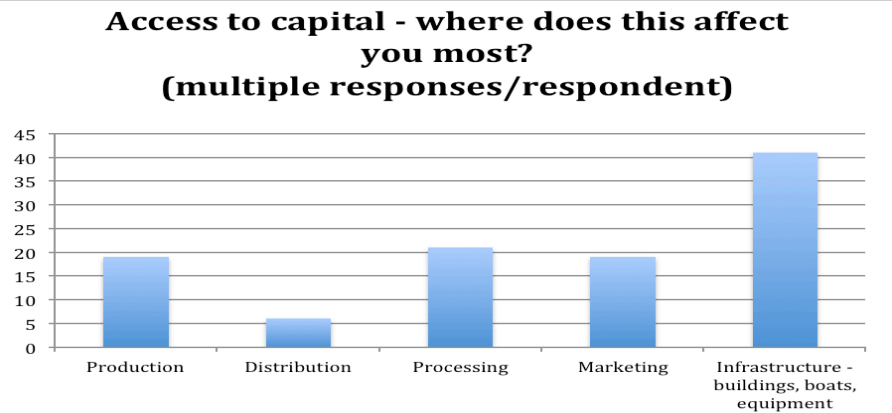
## Spring 2013 Discussion Series on Washington County's Food System - Summary

Organized and convened by Washington County: One Community and GROWashington-Aroostook

| Category  | Identified Gap/Need  | Suggested Next Steps  | Possible Stakeholders                             |                             |    |                        |    |                          |    |                                    |   |                      |    |   |             |
|---|--|---|---|-----------------------------|----|------------------------|----|--------------------------|----|------------------------------------|---|----------------------|----|---|-------------|
|   | Local food needs to be convenient (in time, money, and location) and accessible  |   | MOFGA Impact Study                                |                             |    |                        |    |                          |    |                                    |   |                      |    |   |             |
|   | A wider range of available crops at affordable costs   | Educational opportunities on alternative crops  |   |                             |    |                        |    |                          |    |                                    |   |                      |    |   |             |
|   | More opportunities to share meals such as the Cherryfield Table of Plenty that increases demand for local food and brings people together.   | Expand the Table of Plenty model to other communities   | Faith-based groups, churches                      |                             |    |                        |    |                          |    |                                    |   |                      |    |   |             |
| <b>Distribution</b>   | <b>Access to food hubs/grower cooperatives - storage, processing, and selling</b>  | <b>Feasibility study of highest needs</b>   | <b>Maine Institute of Technology grant, WCOC?</b> |                             |    |                        |    |                          |    |                                    |   |                      |    |   |             |
|   |  <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Distribution issues hindering growth?<br/>(multiple responses/respondent)</b></p> <table border="1"> <caption>Data from Distribution Issues Chart</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Issue</th> <th>Number of Responses</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Available hubs with storage</td> <td>22</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Logistics and dispatch</td> <td>25</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Available truck capacity</td> <td>15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Insufficient/inefficient back haul</td> <td>7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cost of Distribution</td> <td>25</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | Issue   | Number of Responses                               | Available hubs with storage | 22 | Logistics and dispatch | 25 | Available truck capacity | 15 | Insufficient/inefficient back haul | 7 | Cost of Distribution | 25 | Identify and prioritize the "others, let's discuss distribution issues noted in the chart at right. | WCCOG, WCOC |
|   |  | Issue   | Number of Responses                               |                             |    |                        |    |                          |    |                                    |   |                      |    |   |             |
|   |  | Available hubs with storage   | 22  |                             |    |                        |    |                          |    |                                    |   |                      |    |   |             |
|   |  | Logistics and dispatch  | 25  |                             |    |                        |    |                          |    |                                    |   |                      |    |   |             |
| Available truck capacity  | 15   |   |   |                             |    |                        |    |                          |    |                                    |   |                      |    |   |             |
| Insufficient/inefficient back haul  | 7  |   |   |                             |    |                        |    |                          |    |                                    |   |                      |    |   |             |
| Cost of Distribution  | 25   |   |   |                             |    |                        |    |                          |    |                                    |   |                      |    |   |             |
| Locate funding  | USDA grants, Rural Business grants   |   |   |                             |    |                        |    |                          |    |                                    |   |                      |    |   |             |
| Coordinated energy efficient transportation systems thru technological innovations, logistics and dispatch, and coordination of back-hauling with other hubs throughout Maine | Research successful Maine and New England models   | Maine Food Strategy, Crown of Maine,  |   |                             |    |                        |    |                          |    |                                    |   |                      |    |   |             |
| Computerized (web-based) systems with product availability and pricing  | Buying Club models   |   |   |                             |    |                        |    |                          |    |                                    |   |                      |    |   |             |
| Washington County marketing brand of cleanliness and purity selling products that could include "farm of origin" labeling   |  |   |   |                             |    |                        |    |                          |    |                                    |   |                      |    |   |             |
| <b>Waste Management</b>   | Utilization and protection of waste resources such as shellfish waste, wood, and peat for soil amendments that includes closed loop system improvements- such as large scale composting at schools and other institutions, hydro power, and facility waste heat being used to heat a production greenhouse   | Approach Coast of Maine/Mark Wright to determine feasibility of increased local waste utilization |   |                             |    |                        |    |                          |    |                                    |   |                      |    |   |             |
|   |  | Develop plans to increase composting at institutions/schools                                      |   |                             |    |                        |    |                          |    |                                    |   |                      |    |   |             |

## Spring 2013 Discussion Series on Washington County's Food System - Summary

Organized and convened by Washington County: One Community and GROWashington-Aroostook

| Category  | Identified Gap/Need   | Suggested Next Steps   | Possible Stakeholders |            |    |              |   |            |    |           |    |  |    |   |                                 |
|---|---|--|-----------------------|------------|----|--------------|---|------------|----|-----------|----|--|----|---|---------------------------------|
| <b>Support System</b>   | <p style="color: red;">Access to financing capital for all aspects of the food system including direct to producers</p> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p><b>Access to capital - where does this affect you most?</b><br/><b>(multiple responses/respondent)</b></p>  <table border="1" style="display: none;"> <caption>Data for 'Access to capital - where does this affect you most?' chart</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Stage</th> <th>Number of Responses</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Production</td> <td>20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Distribution</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Processing</td> <td>22</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Marketing</td> <td>20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Infrastructure - buildings, boats, equipment</td> <td>42</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> </div> | Stage  | Number of Responses   | Production | 20 | Distribution | 5 | Processing | 22 | Marketing | 20 | Infrastructure - buildings, boats, equipment | 42 | <p style="color: red;">Dedicated individual to source financial opportunities</p> | <p style="color: red;">SCEC</p> |
|   | Stage   | Number of Responses  |                       |            |    |              |   |            |    |           |    |  |    |   |                                 |
|   | Production  | 20   |                       |            |    |              |   |            |    |           |    |  |    |   |                                 |
|   | Distribution  | 5  |                       |            |    |              |   |            |    |           |    |  |    |   |                                 |
|   | Processing  | 22   |                       |            |    |              |   |            |    |           |    |  |    |   |                                 |
|   | Marketing   | 20   |                       |            |    |              |   |            |    |           |    |  |    |   |                                 |
|   | Infrastructure - buildings, boats, equipment  | 42   |                       |            |    |              |   |            |    |           |    |  |    |   |                                 |
|   | <p>Local, state and federal laws and regulations that support food independence, protect the environment and provide support for farmland preservation, and water and overfishing protection</p>  |  |                       |            |    |              |   |            |    |           |    |  |    |   |                                 |
| <p>Schools giving credibility to local food through revival of Home Economics in public schools, ag courses and programs on food systems, aquaculture, tidal power (ex. Unity College, COA, UMO, Shead, Unity East)</p>   | <p>Identify local school partner to re-initiate HomeEc</p>  | <p>Narraguagus HS via the USDA FTS grant?</p>  |                       |            |    |              |   |            |    |           |    |  |    |   |                                 |
| <p>Increased Cooperative Extension support such as Horticultural and livestock/pasture management support, 4-H and Master Gardeners programing</p>  | <p>?</p>  | <p>Alan Majka</p>  |                       |            |    |              |   |            |    |           |    |  |    |   |                                 |
| <p style="color: red;">Increased educational opportunities on: nutrition, whole foods cooking classes, regionally adapted and historic food preservation and crop and livestock production techniques, off-season production techniques, seed saving, soil fertility, marketing, corporate control of food system</p> | <p style="color: red;">Develop a education series that covers many of the above topics in collaboration with schools, extension, WCOC and others</p>  | <p style="color: red;">UMaine Extension, FSA, SWCD, FTS, Food Pantry Directors, WCOC</p> |                       |            |    |              |   |            |    |           |    |  |    |   |                                 |
| <p>More community gatherings and communication channels involving all residents including youth (community Grange revival, county fairs, 4-H, community suppers with local foods, New Zealand livestock visiting school day model)</p>  | <p>Support the increased local food impact of the Pembroke Trotters Association, Perry Harvest Fair, Blueberry festival</p>   | <p>Pembroke Trotters Association, Perry Harvest Fair, Blueberry festival organizers</p>  |                       |            |    |              |   |            |    |           |    |  |    |   |                                 |
| <p>Need for a centralized community site that incorporates: a café and shared commercial kitchen with grain mills and processing equipment, hotel/hostel,</p>   | <p>Identify a site and entrepreneur for a pilot</p>   |  |                       |            |    |              |   |            |    |           |    |  |    |   |                                 |

## Spring 2013 Discussion Series on Washington County's Food System - Summary

Organized and convened by Washington County: One Community and GROWashington-Aroostook

| Category | Identified Gap/Need  | Suggested Next Steps   | Possible Stakeholders  |
|----------|--|--|--|
|          | farmer's market, buying club, bulletin boards (where people can locate food, recipes, volunteer, mentorship/apprenticeship opportunities, bartering opportunities)   | project in Machias, Eastport or Calais?  |  |
|          | Need for state and local regulation and taxation structures that show municipal support and recognition for agriculture/fishing and their accompanying components, such as farm labor and housing, real estate agents, town councils, selectmen having a literacy about farms and working waterfronts and their economic importance) | Research successful models in Maine or New England<br>Approach legislators, Town govts with proposal | Maine Food Strategy, Grow Smart ME, CEI                          |
|          | Generate demand for local food through education via innovative and engaging activities  | Education projects directed at both youth and adults-  | Community events such as fairs and festivals, WCOC, SNAP funding |
|          | More sharing, communicating, disseminating by emails, virtual media, posters, handouts that link local food needs and local and state agency/organization/individual initiatives   | Coordinator to develop a system, research successful models  | WCOC (HMP CFC funds)   |
|          | Opportunities for age diverse mentorships - experienced farmers mentoring less experienced farmers to share knowledge  | Identify mentors   | Current producers/fishermen                                      |
|          |  | Locate apprentices via MOFGA and other avenues   | FSA, producers, MOFGA,   |
|          | Increased bartering opportunities of all types including trade labor and other resources such as land for food and goods among producers and others  | Grassroots motivated; allow opportunities to flourish; research successful models                    |  |
|          | Develop Agri-tourism and volun-tourism planning  | GIS mapping of potential sites   | WCCOG, GROWa, town govts   |
|          | Increased access to cultural and historical agricultural and marine knowledge (why we do things the way we do, such as planting a crop a certain way)  | Education opportunities at schools and other   | Historical societies   |
|          | Availability of farm and greenhouse tours to share knowledge   | Work with MOFGA, SCFA and others to promote tours via a regular series                               | UMM, Perry School, local farms,                                  |
|          | Demand for food sovereignty laws   | Grassroots efforts; research successes in Hancock Cty  |  |

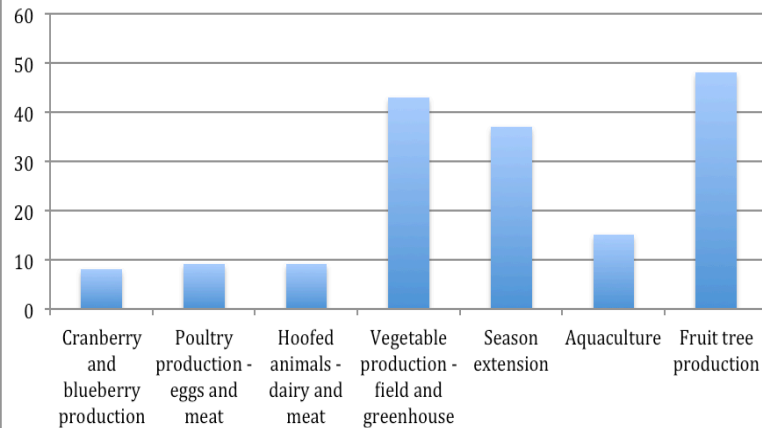


# Spring 2013 Discussion Series on Washington County's Food System - Summary

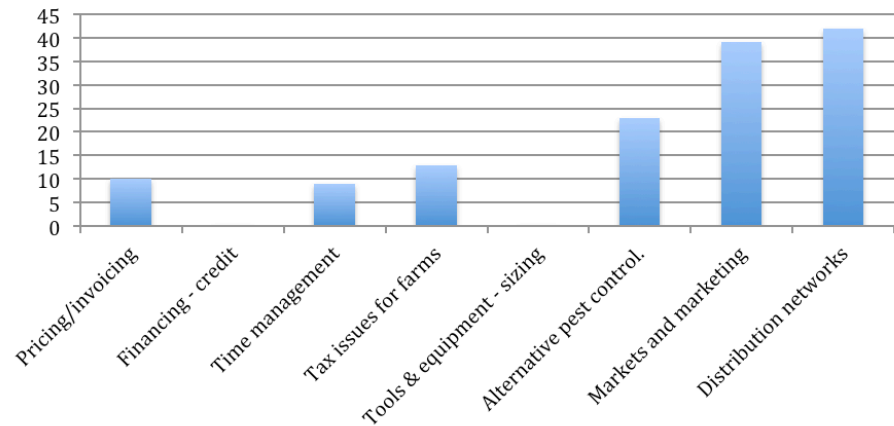
Organized and convened by Washington County: One Community and GROWashington-Aroostook

## Appendix A - Educational Series Interests (including time and location interest)

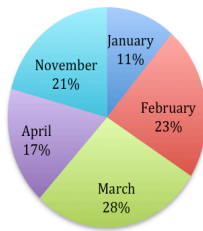
**Audience interest in Production workshops (multiple responses/respondent)**



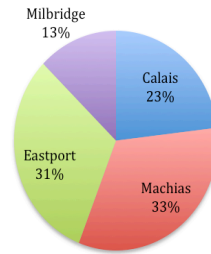
**Audience interest in Management workshops (multiple responses/respondent)**



**Audience preference: Time of year for workshops**



**Audience preference: Location for workshops**



**Audience preference: Time to attend workshops**

