

**Considerations for discussion of 15 Climate Change Advisory Committee  
Recommendations  
Environmental Quality Council  
May 2008**

The information below is a summary of key points from the Montana Climate Change Action Plan and the associated appendices. The legislative and administrative options prepared by staff and participating agencies do not include an economic analysis.

**AFW-11**

**Programs to Promote Local Food and Fiber**

**(75% of participating EQC members voting 4 or 5 and 59% of the public voting 4 or 5)**

✓ 20% of food consumed in Montana to be grown and processed in MT by 2010; 30% by 2020.

**\*Note:** Much of the information below was prepared and offered by the Department of Agriculture.

*Note provided by the Department of Agriculture on AFW-11:*

The detailed description of AFW-11, under Policy Design, indicates that the Montana Department of Agriculture could be involved in promotion and tracking of in-state product consumption. The Department currently does not track in-state product consumption in any quantitative manner; this would require tracking in significant detail. This would be a major undertaking and if implemented would involve much more cost and effort than the ½ FTE identified as the cost of the alternative.

It is also questionable whether the grocery and food service supply chains will (or even can) provide the information needed to quantitatively track the progress of this alternative. The metrics appear to require monitoring food consumption by weight, which could be difficult to determine. This sort of market monitoring/census is not a competency of the Department and may be more appropriately handled by the University of Montana Bureau of Business and Economic Research, a trade organization, or a private contractor with experience monitoring the grocery and food service industry.

AFW-11 is very ambitious and Montana Department of Agriculture staff believe that realistically a significantly greater investment will be necessary (than the ½ FTE identified in the plan appendices) to meet the objective of doubling consumption of Montana grown, harvested, and processed food by 2020.

It also should be noted that the Made in Montana Program is managed by the Montana Department of Commerce.

While the Montana Department of Agriculture seeks to expand food production and processing in Montana, it recognizes that AFW-11 likely provides little benefit in greenhouse gas emissions reductions relative to other alternatives. Thank you for the opportunity to participate in the policy development process as it pertains to Programs to Promote Local Food and Fiber.

**Conservation Considerations:**

- Reduces transportation and manufacturing emissions and costs
- Pages I-66 through I-70 in Appendices

### **What's Being Done:**

- Grow Montana program. Broad-based coalition with common goal to promote community economic development policies that support sustainable Montana-owned food production, processing, and distribution.
- Mobile Meat Slaughter bill. Passed by 2005 Montana Legislature authorizes Department of Livestock to inspect mobile meat slaughter units. A mobile poultry processing unit also has been ordered.
- Local food for government agencies. Senate Bill No. 328, approved by the 2007 Legislature, establishes an optional procurement exception applicable to the purchase of Montana-produced food products by governmental bodies.
- The Montana Department of Agriculture and the Travel Montana Program (Montana Department of Commerce) promote Farmers Markets.
- Community Gardens throughout Montana.
- Department of Agriculture Food and Agricultural Products Directory and companion references, the AgriBusiness Resource Directory and the Sheep Directory list agricultural producers and processors in the state.
- *Abundant Montana*. Directory published by AERO that includes sustainable farms, ranches, and retailers by region and by farm name.
- Department of Agriculture Montana Organic Program.
- Grow through Ag grants. Funding sunsets in 2010.
- BioProduct Innovation Centers. Funded by WIRED grant that sunsets in 2010.
- Senate Joint Resolution 13 Interim Study on the redevelopment of a Montana food processing industry. (Under the oversight of the Economic Affairs Interim Committee.)
- Farm to College Programs.
  - University of Montana Missoula Farm to College Program – purchases have reached the \$2 million dollar mark.
  - University of Montana – Western (Dillon) Farm to College Program – approximately 16% of annual food budget.
- Montana State University Food Service Montana Made Program – approximately 10% of food budget on products processed in Montana, about \$300,000 per year.
- Montana State University's Towne's Harvest Garden is expanding.
- Montana State University-Bozeman, University of Montana-Western at Dillon, Salish Kootenai College, and Missoula County Public Schools are working with "Food Corps" of Americorps VISTA volunteers, who will help them increase the amount of Montana-grown or processed food they serve in their cafeterias.
- A School to Farm group is organizing in the Bozeman School System.
- Sustainable Food Systems Degrees at Montana State University – a joint effort of the College of Agriculture and the College Education, Health and Human Development.
- "Made in Montana" label promoted through the Montana Department of Commerce.
- Made in Montana Show – City of Great Falls and the Montana Department of Commerce, with limited assistance by the Montana Department of Agriculture.
- Congressional appropriation requests:
  - A \$3 million appropriation request for the cannery in Deer Lodge has been forwarded to the Congressional Delegation.
  - A \$3.46 million appropriation request for Mission Mountain Food Enterprise

Center and a similar facility in Glendive has been forwarded to the Congressional Delegation.

- DPHHS has developed an electronic benefit card (food stamp) with limited geographic usage.
- DPHHS revised its policies to allow organic food purchases for food stamp benefits.
- Food and Agriculture listserv with 400 participants has been developed.
- A group calling themselves the “Montivores” (which is interested in promoting local food for local people) has started in the Bozeman area.
- Montana Cooperative Development Center. Funding sunsets in 2010.
- While not an activity in Montana, the February 2008 recall of 143 million pounds of ground beef processed by Westland/Hallmark Meat Company in Chino, Calif. may have implications that will encourage local beef processing and market development. Much of the beef was destined to school lunch programs and other institutional buyers, and 246 Montana schools were affected by the recall.

**Potential Action:**

\* Legislative or EQC options (not complete, intended to be starting point for discussion):

- Encourage/require institutions that purchase large quantities of food to buy local. For example, the 2007 Legislature contemplated, House Bill No. 716, a grant program to help local schools develop relationships with local food providers. The bill died in committee.
- Incentives for enhancing the state's production, processing, storage, and distribution infrastructure.
- Establish funding sources for programs that may sunset in 2010.
- Funding to finance the statistical tracking of food consumption in Montana by weight of Montana-sourced food products and all non-Montana sourced food products, presumably by categories of product types.
- Research funding for the Montana Manufacturing Extension Center to evaluate the logistics of increased produce production (relying on research identified above) in combination with the logistics of the current food manufacturing and distribution system to provide useful information for existing and new private enterprise in the food manufacturing industry.
- Research funding for the MSU Agriculture Research Centers earmarked for:
  - vegetable and fruit variety trials and demonstrations that would provide information useful for the establishment of increased commercial produce production in Montana.
  - geospatial analysis of soil, climate, and irrigation analysis to evaluate and identify cropland resources conducive to vegetable and fruit production, as well as identification of which produce crops can likely be successfully grown in the locations identified.
- Funding to the Montana Manufacturing Extension Center to provide subsidized technical assistance to new entrants in the produce, meat processing, and food manufacturing industries to help solve logistics and labor supply challenges; to determine appropriate scales and scopes of operation; and to identify potential synergies to be exploited.
- New funding for the promotion of Montana grown, harvested, processed food – beyond the current level of funding of related existing programs.

- Tax and finance incentives sufficiently enticing to encourage the establishment of efficient large scale meat processing facilities in Montana.
- Increased funding for public institution food procurement – to offset the almost inevitable higher costs of purchasing Montana grown, harvested, processed food. This has to be accompanied by some safeguards to ensure that opportunistic businesses do not price-gouge Montana institutions and to make sure that a “new” food processing industry in Montana is not excessively nurtured so as to become competitively weak, according to the Department of Agriculture.
- Continued or increased public investment in irrigation infrastructure and advantageous public finance for irrigation development for more productive irrigated farming, more efficient use of water, and increased acreage under irrigation.

\* Resolution or recommendation stating intent

\* No Action

\* Administrative options:

- Encourage large purchasers, like corrections, to buy local food products.
- Expand on education and information programs that promote local food and fiber. Focus on promoting, educating, or encouraging use of "Made in Montana" products, promoted through the Department of Agriculture.