

# Munch ON THIS



## **Local Food**

By Marcia Rae  
January 6, 2010

The mission of the Calapooia Food Alliance is to promote local food for local folk. Last spring we applied for a USDA grant. This grant's purpose is/was – “to increase domestic consumption of agricultural commodities by expanding producer-to-consumer market opportunities.”

To our delight and surprise, the CFA learned in October that we had been awarded this grant along with about 86 other entities across the US.

When we applied for the grant, these were, and are, our stated goals –

- Increase the consumption of local farm products
- Provide access of local food products to low-income families
- Increase production of local farm produce
- Enhance the Brownsville Farmers Market experience

We plan to accomplish this by these fundamental methodologies –

- Implement direct marketing strategies in order to increase consumer awareness and educate community members on the advantages of purchasing local produce
- Allow use of SNAP Oregon Tail Cards (food stamps) at the Market
- Actively seek out new farmers; support farmers to increase production and sales
- Bring more consumers to the Market by enhancing the Market experience as a community event

As the Project Manager for the grant, it is my job to achieve these goals. To that end, I would like to introduce this new *Times* column. Look for it each week. In it, I intend to make an unabashed effort to convince you to think about how you spend your food money.

This past week, I received my Oregon Special Election Voters' Pamphlet in the mail. I know I can make a difference by voting. I also know that I cast my vote each time I spend a dollar. And I ask myself, “where does this dollar end up?” Does it support people I care about? Does it keep my community clean and healthy?

I hope you will stay tuned to future iterations of this column and give me a chance to stir up some dialogue, to have you consider the choices you make with the food you choose to eat, and to provide tidbits of information that might change our world one little, bitsy bite at a time.

See you in *The Times* next week - learn what Rain Barrel Man Dave Eckert, Munch Night, and Joe's Pizza have in common.

PS – If you have ever entertained the thought of selling food at the Brownsville Farmers Market, please join us for a Season 2010 planning meeting this Saturday, January 9 at 3:00 p.m. in the Kirk Room at the Brownsville Library. It takes a village.

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