

MC FARM SPRING OC MEETING March 29, 2015

10:15am – Meeting called to order

Motion to approve agenda made by Gloria, seconded by Steph.

December 7 OC Meeting minutes approve, motion made by Thomas and seconded by Gloria.

10:19am – Market Applications and Paperwork – Angela

Not set up to receive them quite yet, still need to redo the vendor packet. This year, the membership card is pink. Not too many changes to the market application, although Caprice and her husband have revamped the online version. It will be interactive and as a PDF, but not going to be able to submit online just yet.

The vendorship that people can sign up for now runs until April 30, 2016. Working on getting everything put on website. Angela wants to reduce quantity of paperwork that she's sending out, so she's going to put some of the forms online for existing vendors. New vendors will get the whole entire packet in a hardcopy. Angela thinks we should include Food Safety flyer from Ag Dept in the new vendor packet this year.

Ag department permit, event permit for Environmental Health, and a few minor changes to the Monthly Report. Active food facility permit has to be re-upped as well. If a market has two locations, two food facility permits have to happen. No money is sent in with community event app, Angela sends money with food facility permit. Managers just send in the paperwork and Angela pays them. WIC has to be re-upped, they last about 3 years. Boonville needs to check on that, and get all the paperwork from Bebing.

DOT permits need 4 copies of map. Market manager agreements passed out and need to be filled out. List of all OC members also needs to be verified.

2015 Approved Budget – changes that were made are some more \$ for website maintenance, and \$600 for operating funds for small markets. Also more \$ for Laytonville market. All the changes added up to \$2000, new stall fees supposed to be adding \$3000. Angela had taken \$1000 out of contingency fund, so it evens out to \$0. Very tidy.

Owe \$622 to CDFA in the quarterly reports. How do we deal with the deficit? Collect from vendors, some have paid and some haven't. In Ukiah, deficit is \$278, Willits \$166, Ft Bragg \$178. This is for January and February operation, will be taken out of operating funds. Julie is going to ask vendors, not force them, and not take it out of operating fund. Michael thinks its important to be consistent, and he thinks it should be just taken out of Operating Fund. But no one in Willits has paid it, Ft Bragg is a different story.

10:41 – Office Managers Report – Angela

Nothing else really to report.

Tightening Account Procedures – Cathy not here, Angela giving it instead.

Cathy has a background with West Company, and other accounting business stuff. Through this year, she's seen how MCFarm operates (she's been treasurer for a year or so). She says the petty cash seems extravagant, \$500 too much in her opinion. Angela emphasized that it's important because of the encumbrance of the check signing system, which led to a discussion about tightening up practices with the way that money is accounted for, with operating funds. We already need receipts for all expenses, or at least an invoice. Some kind of paper trail is needed, what kind is up for debate. She doesn't agree with the practice of just writing out accounting. E.g. "Promotional event costs \$1300" is not enough information in her opinion, she wants more information and invoices/receipts. Copy of the receipts can be scanned and emailed, what does not work is emails listing monies paid, copies of contracts. We need receipts! For example, if paying a musician, there will be a receipt book that they can sign. Michael asks if she would need receipts from a pot of cash for an event that gets paid out to band, etc. Angela says that Cathy is worried about audits, which she's been through, which can require things to be paid back way after the fact. Michael asks about donations in-kind, Angela says we are just worrying about expenditures. If operating funds are being used for an event, than everything needs to be accounted for. If you don't use any MC Farm money, then you don't have to worry about it.

In the past, checks have been made out to individual markets, not to managers. That's been a purposeful effort. But Cathy disagrees with that practice because making out the checks to the markets gives an appearance of impropriety. She proposes simple change for advances, check gets made out to individual but is deposited in business account. Many of the people here think that seems more inappropriate. Angela said she's never seen a case of impropriety, and there are a couple of safeguards in place like having numerous signors on the account. Michael points out that this only pertains to the advance. Gloria says its backwards, because if checks are made out to market managers, then they would have to report it on 1099. Michael points out that it's not really a concern for MC Farm, it's more of a concern for individual market managers since they are the account holders. Cathy is worried about people skipping out with funds. Angela says they will consult a CPA and report back. Scott sums up by saying that if we go that route, market managers need to know how to classify those advances. Potentially an alternate way to satisfy Cathy would be to add an item to the market manager contract, "At the end of the year, I will reimburse any unaccounted for advances that I have received." Angela says if we need operating funds advanced as market managers, need to tell her now.

11:06am – MCFarm Customer, vendor, location growth for 2015 – Caprice  
Caprice wants to grow markets. She says that people have to be persistent to get to the market. What works to get new customers?  
Gloria's market in Laytonville had a 20% increase recently, she thinks that moving helped a lot. And having more meat.  
EBT match also helps. Sakina says the last month of market was really slow, strategies? 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday community event in RV worked for bringing bodies, not

necessarily customers. Steph says keeping vendors consistent is really important for that. Sakina says maybe it would be cool to make October 'art in the market' month, but that would present a problem if they're not technically a member. Julie points out that it's important that everyone who sells is a member, for insurance reasons. Michael says those folks pay so much for fair stalls, that the MC Farm fee is not that steep in comparison, even for just a month.

Caprice has suggestions for ways to improve traffic: coupon incentives. Michael says he's done it with operating funds, and he's seen very little coming back. Market loyalty cards seem to work well, Scott and Julie have used them. Tom points out that one of the problems that is presented is that farmers market prices are not competitive with Ukiah coop and Mariposa. Emphasize freshness, Michael says. Valerie suggests cards with information about why it's important to shop farmers' markets over grocery stores. Caprice thinks it's important to have consistency across all the markets as a brand... Julie says this is all fine, but people really need a reason to come back every week. That's where loyalty card comes in.

Break

Ease of finding market manager and EBT funds. Standardized banner is a suggestion for manager table. Ben asks if there's some way for EBT sponsors to put promo material on tables, Scott specifies if it's marijuana growers union related (for example), is that ok with people? Everybody says yes. Julie says she specifically tells users where the matching funds come from at her market.

Caprice asks if we can get sponsorships from local nurseries for instance, MCFarm cannot but individual farmers can. Caprice also thinks that the vendor base could be increased by including more variety of vendors like crafters, etc. She also thinks it would be nice to have an input clearinghouse for other events like fairs and such. Market locations – were there other locations that fell by the wayside? Most people here feel that adding new markets is not a benefit for existing markets, or for the small markets that would be coming in. Too much paperwork to be worth their while.

11:50am – Website update and maintenance

Laytonville needs to be updated. Caprice suggests that we add images to the recipes section of the website. Email should be sent out to market managers with instructions to get into the website so they can update stuff individually. Sakina wants to get Mendocino Farmers Market linked to destination websites. Visitmendocino website is going to put market info on their website, according to Caprice. Also listing markets on some kind of more general NorCal tourism website would be good says Caprice. Sakina says she needs training so she can manage those types of updates on her own.

Sakina suggests that we add a page for EBT, where EBT donors/supporters/underwriters can be recognized. Motion made, seconded. Julie is concerned that sponsorship not be associated with MC Farm because we are not actually allowed to accept donations. Elizabeth says she will put any donor on NCO

main page website, Steph says that NCO administers the match money at least for Ukiah and Redwood Valley. So they are a non-profit, and can accept donations. Michael calls to question, everyone's in favor.

12:15pm – What are expectations for VP? Caprice  
Newsletter. Caprice wants all input for the format she's created by April 15<sup>th</sup>. Her email is [caprice@spiceoflifeorganics.com](mailto:caprice@spiceoflifeorganics.com). She'd like to see from vendors what kind of technology has helped, how to take better pictures, etc. She welcomes these kinds of tips for the newsletter.

12:18pm – Status on the Petition to Modify the New Regulations – Michael  
Hard to organize sub-committee, but Michael has a final version of petition. Passing it around. The next step is to send separate letters to legislators and county people, and to arrange meetings with these people. Scott advocates that we sit down with Chuck to discuss this before he gets blindsided. Michael says we need to correct the spelling of Dan Gjerde's name, but otherwise this petition is good to go.

12:25pm – Approving New Poster Design – Angela  
Angela says old artist fell off, so she found this new woman Colette Vegan. Her first poster for us, so we should give her adequate feedback. Justin puts out the suggestion that last year's poster is better than this new one. Sakina agrees. The idea is to maybe adopt 2011's poster with amended text, have the new artist do that instead. Elizabeth moves that we direct new artist to amend 2011 poster, seconded by Justin. Everyone's in favor.

12:30pm – Status of Rack Cards – Angela  
Market managers will distribute them, they are reformatted with more generic text so they can be used from year-to-year.  
Promotional Items  
We're out of hats. We want bumper stickers. Chico bags.  
Angela will order the stickers, they'll be green with the logo and website, and the text will say Support Your Local Farmers Market.  
Elizabeth says Sienna of Thumbprint Press is making RV Market t-shirts and may be open to making a more generic t-shirt.

12:55pm – Open Discussion about 2015 Season & MCFarm  
EBT stuff – Finney grant from Ecology Center results should be coming back in the next few days. Talk of pooling together EBT efforts, but also good reasons for individual communities to raise funds. Valerie asks about where to start with match: \$10 match is a good place to start say Steph and Elizabeth. Interest in news coverage of farmers market stuff for KZYX, but there was a bad article written up in the Ft. Bragg Advocate News about coastal markets. Have to be careful with the press.

1:10pm – Tips for New Managers

Sakina will be going on Farm & Garden show, wants tips. Stay positive, emphasize that the markets are growing, how much fun they are, etc.

Julie suggests keeping up on paperwork for new market managers.

Michael says its good to have help at beginning and end of market, if you're a vendor and a manager.

Elizabeth says it was helpful to put market manager table next to vendor table, and also next to someone who can help with sale if manager gets called away for a moment.

Vendor potluck works for some markets, especially if there's a camaraderie already there.

Julie's advice is to keep things simple, stay calm and organized.

1:25pm – Announcements

Ben says we should standardize the numbers for EBT, i.e. are people reporting EBT taken in, total or matched?

MC Farm needs to know how much EBT was spent at the market, includes match.

Individual market managers should keep track of how much EBT went through machine, how much was matched, how much was spent. Julie says she also keeps track of EBT tokens dispensed so she knows.

EBT Fundraiser for Boonville Farmers Market on Memorial Day weekend, vendors are invited to come for afternoon vending on Saturday 1-4pm May 30<sup>th</sup>.