



Improving Access to Fresh, Healthy Food

The New Orleans Food Policy Advisory Committee



2005 FALL

- PRC Faculty and Staff assess status of existing projects and the condition of New Orleans post-hurricane.
- PRC Directors lend their expertise in early planning efforts.

2006 WINTER/SPRING

- PRC Faculty and Staff attend neighborhood meetings and charrettes where they promote rebuilding neighborhoods in ways that incorporate health.
- PRC conducts a survey for a Robert Wood Johnson grant called *Rebuilding Neighborhoods for Healthy Children and Families*.
- The survey asks more than 1,000 residents who have returned or want to return what they would like to see in rebuilt neighborhoods.
- Many healthful neighborhood features rate highly in the survey results, including **neighborhood grocery stores**.

SUMMER/FALL

- A report on the survey is promoted at neighborhood planning meetings. The PRC also produces a graphic brochure detailing *What Makes a Neighborhood Healthy?*
- Several groups begin to meet around the topic of food access in New Orleans, including Grow New Orleans and the Healthy Eating Coalition.
- John Weidman, deputy director of the Food Trust, addresses a Tulane audience as part of the PRC's seminar series. His talk focuses on the Philadelphia Fresh Food Financing Initiative.

2007 WINTER/SPRING

- The PRC and other agencies begin to look at best practices around the country. Food Policy Councils seem to have had success in other states and cities.
- The group becomes the Partnership to Create a Food Policy Advisory Committee. (Partner logos shown below.)
- The Partnership gathers data to illustrate need for better access, including the development of a map showing the location of supermarkets before and after Katrina and a survey of low-income residents' food preferences and purchase habits.
- Relationships are formed with the City Council, particularly with the Council President's deputy chief of staff.
- In May, the City Council authorizes the creation of a Food Policy Advisory Committee.

SUMMER/FALL

- A broad-based Committee is formed, including local and national grocers, banking and financial leaders, local food and child welfare proponents, hunger and poverty advocates, public health agencies, government officials, and other stakeholders. Many of these groups have never been at the same table.
- Initial meetings bring members up to speed on the topic of food access in New Orleans and nationally.
- By Fall, members begin developing a list of recommendations to present to the City Council.
- In the Fall, Steps to a Healthier LA/New Orleans launches its **Corner Store Initiative**.

2008 WINTER/SPRING

- The Food Policy Advisory Committee presents its recommendations to the Economic Development Committee of the City Council in early January. Days later, the entire Council passes a resolution in support of all ten recommendations.
- A task force, convened by Council President Arnie Fielkow, meets regularly to develop strategies for implementation of the recommendations.
- The PRC, the Food Trust, and other partners continue to educate state legislators and agencies about the opportunity to launch a financing program similar to Philadelphia's Fresh Food Financing Initiative.

Partner Agencies:



Food Policy Advisory Committee Recommendations:

- 1 The City of New Orleans should adopt fresh food retailing as a priority for comprehensive neighborhood development and the City's Office of Recovery and Development Administration should direct grants and loans to food retail projects located in target areas.
- 2 The City of New Orleans should reduce regulatory barriers to businesses that sell fresh food.
- 3 The City of New Orleans should provide tax incentives to encourage the sale of fresh food.
- 4 The City of New Orleans should prioritize security for supermarkets and grocery stores.
- 5 The City of New Orleans and the State of Louisiana should make economic development programs available to fresh food retailers.
- 6 The City of New Orleans and the State of Louisiana should address the need for transportation to supermarkets, grocery stores, and farmers' markets.
- 7 The State of Louisiana should develop a financing program that would provide grants and loans to supermarkets, smaller grocery stores, and other fresh food retailers that enhance healthy food access in underserved areas.
- 8 The State of Louisiana should expand participation in federal nutrition programs that enable more residents - especially seniors and families with children - to purchase locally grown fresh fruit and vegetables at farmers' markets.
- 9 The State of Louisiana should partner with fresh food retailers to create vocational training opportunities in the fresh food retail sector.
- 10 The New Orleans Food Policy Advisory Committee should serve as an ongoing, multi-stakeholder advisory body to the City Council.