

An Invitation to Participate in a New Effort to Advance Healthy Eating & Locally Grown Food in West Central Minnesota

3/20/09

Are you interested in improving the availability of fresh, high quality, locally-grown food in your town? Are you part of a group of active citizens, a church, civic or neighborhood group concerned about the availability of good, nutritious food for the children, families and elderly people in your community?

If so, we want to hear from you. We are a collaboration of four organizations working for nutritious foods, healthy landscapes, economically vibrant rural communities and profitable family farms in west central Minnesota. With the support of Blue Cross Blue Shield Prevention Minnesota, the Land Stewardship Project, the University of Minnesota's West Central Sustainable Development Partnership, U of M Extension, and the Crossroads Resource Center want to identify two west central Minnesota communities that are interested in:

- Taking a look at the availability and cost of nutritious food in the communities.
- The interest in developing the capacity for providing more good food locally through existing farms, new farms, community gardens and urban agriculture efforts.
- The extent of hunger in our communities and how creative new approaches to our food system might be able to address this challenge.

“We really want to work with communities that have an interest in improving their access to good, local food,” said Terry VanDerPol, Director of the Land Stewardship Project's Community Based Food Systems and Economic Development Program. “This project will be shaped by the community group that knows its community and its assets and strengths the best. We want to help interested communities develop a plan that will work for them. After a careful assessment of what your community's good food assets, strengths and challenges are, we'll work with your community group to move into a planning and problem-solving mode, applying your community's unique assets to implement solutions you identify to the challenges you name.”

If you are interested in getting involved with this effort to make a difference in your community, contact the Land Stewardship Project's Tom Taylor at 320-269-2105 or ttaylor@landstewardshipproject.org.