



Commissioner Judy Shiprack

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Multnomah County Announces Major Food Initiative

On September 10, 2009, Multnomah County Commissioner Judy Shiprack will sponsor a resolution before the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners to launch the Multnomah Food Initiative which will create the first ever comprehensive food action plan in the region. This sweeping action plan will be developed as a public-private partnership between government and community stakeholders to ensure a sustainable and equitable regional food system.

The Multnomah Food Initiative is designed to:

- promote the health and sustainability of our community
- strengthen our local food system and ensure food access for all
- prioritize food system issues by developing a comprehensive food action plan and 15 year roadmap through a multi-jurisdictional and non-governmental partnership effort

The Multnomah Food Initiative is based on the recommendations of the Portland/Multnomah Food Policy Council (FPC), a joint committee established by Multnomah County and the City of Portland to advocate and advise on food policy issues. The FPC determined that the current economic and hunger crises, as well as long-term climate change challenges, creates an immediate need for innovative action and visionary policy implementation to help meet the food security needs of residents, to promote the nutritional health of the community, and to create meaningful economic development opportunities.

“When you think about the fact that Oregon is the third hungriest state in the nation and that half of the adults in Multnomah County are obese, the need for a comprehensive food policy that addresses hunger and health becomes clear”, said Commissioner Shiprack. “We are doing some great work in this community around food and food access; I’m thrilled to help lead these efforts to the next level.”

“Multnomah County residents are passionate about local food and there are many organizations doing wonderful work on hunger and health issues. However, what our community currently does not have is a strategic plan for success on achieving a truly sustainable and equitable food system,” said Kat West, Multnomah County Sustainability Manager. “The Multnomah Food Initiative will be an unprecedented collaboration within our community to ensure that everyone has meaningful access to healthy, sustainable, and affordable food.

Multnomah County will be hosting a Food Summit in early 2010 to engage key stakeholders and the community to launch the development of the Food Action Plan.

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