

Maine Food System Stakeholder Survey

Of the above activities, what was the most beneficial to you, and why? Please write your response in the space below.

Answered 55

Responses

- 1 None
- 2 Regularly scheduled open meetings, webinars, etc. focused on information sharing
- 3 Small network events across the state - solicits the most input. My organization has a statewide reach so (with funding) could attend and hear perspectives, in person, from different regions.
- 4 it's critically important that nonprofit community breaks out of silo mode and starts working across sectors towards common goals. Conflict, turf, and mistrust need to be addressed to gain understanding of common goals
- 5 I haven't attended anything over the past few years. Tired of planning exercises.
- 6 Including individuals in the fisheries sector as stakeholders and cooperators in food security discussions and not just as economic benchmarks helped me connect with others and focus more on evidence-based solutions.
- 7 Like the slogan says - "No farms, No food" . Helping farmers achieve financial sustainability is the lynch pin to achieving environmental sustainability, enhance local food products, and strive to eliminate hunger in our state. If farmers cannot make a living producing food, no amount of feel-good policy statements will keep them afloat. Working to lower input costs for all Maine farmers, supporting government and NGO policies that help keep farmers out of the "red", and raising awareness that buying local is not limited to purchases at farmers' markets and road stands, but can be choices at the grocery store, big box store, or Mom & Pop convenience store.
- 8 Lots of organizations already in this space - must show funders we are collaborating to achieve something credible soon.

- 9 small, local networks than link up to larger state and regional goals; self-governance within linked networks with common
- 10 Small network events
- 11 Promoting successful farms and businesses This is the most important because it actually creates the kind of "buzz" that grows the food system.
- 12 Summit
- 13 A statewide approach to supporting and promoting local food, including the whole food system
- 14 Networking
- 15 multi-sector planning processes because Maine is fragmented

- 16 Resource networks for process to continue development of value added products. Promoting successful farm businesses, I think many from businesses struggle with this.

- 17 Food Council summit brings together people from diverse sectors of the food system and does a great job of mapping the network. Needs more support.
- 18 Information on the food system
- 19 A food council to lead state. ALL of Maine
- 20 Seminars
- 21 I find them all equally important and interesting. When you bring like minded people together change happens.
- 22 Financially successful farms and value added food processing businesses in Maine.
- 23 Seminars...learning fresh approaches, what works and what doesn't
- 24 Resource Networks for different sectors. Get like minded groups working toward common goal.
- 25 Small networking events and Outreach to populations that are usually not at the table. The Usual Suspects take up too much oxygen in the room of most food system events

- 26 State/region wide systems thinking is needed as a basis for translating such thinking into economic, social, political action.

- 27 outreach
- 28 I can't see all the answers now?
- 29 As an educator and researcher in Washington County, food security is a crucial issue for me, so involving less-represented people is key.

- 30 I think an annual convening could be effective to bring together a lot of different people and sectors and have time to network, strategize and collaborate. I do also feel that a statewide food council if done well (inclusive, representative and participatory) could be an effective tool towards advancing the food sector in the state.
- 31 People are busy today and network events on a regional level increases the likelihood that I will attend something.
- 32 Direct outreach of those who are less represented
- 33 Direct outreach and engagement of populations less represented in food systems planning discussions. I think there should be statewide efforts to address issues of migrant farm workers, minority farmers, and farmers in rural Maine. I also think a statewide summit and/or website would be useful.
- 34 Meetings and webinars for learning and sharing opportunities

- 35 Resource networks are very helpful for established nonprofits, volunteer groups, clubs and institutions who are looking to expand their services to their communities or learn new methods/techniques to improve their services
- 36 I believe a state food council would be the most beneficial, but it hasn't been created yet
- 37 multi sector planning process - because it is easier to work together, collaborate, and leverage federal funds for the state if we are well coordinated and have a plan in place

- 38 summit or council - both very beneficial
- 39 developing resource networks: I see lack of a support structure as the biggest inhibitor to success for our small businesses.

- 40 Promoting local farms & businesses. I am a farmer & see the importance of these in strengthening our local communities &
- 41 State Food council
- 42 Learning at seminars and passing along the information .
- 43 See above.
- 44 Previous annual meeting
- 45 Promoting increased farm production.
- 46 Tend to be smaller & more local. Better opportunities to get to know people, products, organizations.
- 47 yes
- 48 I think events that involve some face-to-face time and networking are the most valuable.
- 49 Education and information. Helps with adaptation and moving things ahead successfully
- 50 Small networks
- 51 Promoting successful farms and because I own one

52 Small network events across the state. Each area of Maine has varying needs, so I feel the regional networking would be most beneficial to creating collaboration for our local food system.

53 Most direct way of addressing food system problems

54 I glean story ideas when I attend events. So any event that has an interesting angle on sustainable food in Maine is of interest.

55 Information sharing. If we know what others are doing, we can learn from that to inform our own work as well as identify areas for potential collaboration.