FY 2011 PROGRAM WORK TEAM ANNUAL REPORT

1. Full name of your Program Work Team (PWT):
   
   • Family and Community Food Decision Making

2. Please list names, affiliations and e-mail addresses of the PWT Co-Chairs: (With an asterisk [*], please indicate the co-chair responsible for finalizing this report.)
   
   • Kathy Dischner, Multi-Association Nutrition Team Coordinator, Onondaga and Cayuga Counties, kmd12@cornell.edu
   • Ardyth Gillespie*, Division of Nutritional Sciences, Community Nutrition Program, ahg2@cornell.edu
   • Holly Gump, Greater Finger Lakes Region Nutrition Coordinator, Food and Nutrition Education in Communities Program, hmg2@cornell.edu

3. Please identify your PWT’s activities, accomplishments, and, most importantly, outcomes and impacts over the past year.


   In 2011, we made significant progress toward our long-term objectives for both of these emphases, including:
   
   • Developing and testing family interventions to enhance health and well-being
   • Guiding families in examining and improving their food decision making and routine food and eating practices
   • Helping people think differently (change mindsets) about food and eating and their relationships with family and community food systems
   • Building family and community capacity for identifying and implementing effective change strategies, and
   • Updating what we know about the food decision making of families who participate in the Cooking Together for Family Meals Program

ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

We are achieving these goals through the following activities

1. Continuing development, evaluation, and testing of the evidence-based family food decision making program Cooking Together for Family Meals
   
   • Individual and or/group consultations with seven of CTFM team members in August 2011, led to a greater understanding of:
     
     i. CTFM’s influence on participant families’ food decisions
ii. The role of successful community partnerships to the success of CTFM, and
iii. Training necessary for facilitators who would like to implement CTFM program

- Two meetings were held with the CTFM team (faculty, nutrition program leaders, nutrition educators), on September 6 and September 28. At the first meeting, The leadership team engaged in an inquiry, analysis, experimentation, and application of conceptual frameworks and scientific and local knowledge including: family food decision-making systems framework and the role of family food decision-making in connecting sustainable food systems with health and well-being of children and their families. The second meeting was facilitated by Monica Hargraves, Extension Associate who advised us on the use of the Netway. At these meetings, we summarized the research we have on CTFM, and then, we broke into small groups, and revised the logic model for CTFM, based on the research outcomes. This logic model is on the Netway, and the Pathway model is still under development. The following broad themes emerged from this process:
  i. There were positive changes in participants’ aspirations (cultural capital), attitudes, knowledge and cooking and knife skills (human capital)
  ii. Families reported improvements in practices related to food, family dynamics, and food consumption and food routines & policies
  iii. There were positive changes in family roles, mutual expectations, communications, and encouragement
  iv. Shared responsibility among family members
  v. Efficacy, including increased self-efficacy, increased family efficacy, pride in food preparation skills, and parent recognition of child’s ability
  vi. There were ripple effects, including changes in the local food system

2. Using Collaborative Engaged Research (CER) to add to our knowledge about family food decision making, interventions for changing food and eating practices, and developing methods and tools for building family and community capacity

- We are developing collaborative engaged research (CER) approaches, methods, and tools and innovative strategies for studying family food decision-making, and changing food and eating practices with and without purposive interventions. Cooking Together for Family Meals was developed, using this approach.
- We have established collaborative engaged research (CER) as an asset-based approach to understanding family and community resources (defined as human, social, cultural, financial, built, natural, and political capital) and its practitioners seek to mobilize these assets for facilitating desired social, individual, and family behavior change. For CER, CCE and family and community stakeholders engage with researchers in co-generating grounded theory that illuminates their own local dynamic and evolving food decision-making systems and the social structures and resource allocations involved. We have developed and tested CER methodology concurrently with program and project development and evaluation through engagement with the following leadership teams and projects:
  i. CTFM Team
  ii. Cornell Sustainability of Food Systems research team which is collaborating with CCE-Tompkins County for CER to identify indicators of food security in
the context of the local food system

iii. CER project funded by the Leopold Center, *Connecting Family, Community, and Health from a Food Systems Perspective* in collaboration with Iowa State University and Cass County IA food system and health leaders

iv. Completed the three-year project, *Building Food Systems and Health Leadership Capacity*, with two activities this year: Follow-up consultation with project leadership team members/co-investigators

- Concluded our internal inquiry and reflection into the process for building and maintaining effective food system partnerships with three CER leadership teams -- *Cooking Together for Family Meals* (CTFM), *Connecting Family, Community, and Health from a Food Systems Perspective*, and *Sustainability of Food Systems* research team.
- NC 1033 multistate research team for writing a five year renewal proposal which incorporated the principles and strategies of CER.
- University of Idaho leadership team who developed the “toolbox for philosophical dialogue” to enhance cross-disciplinary research (university-based) to expand this notion to university-community CER teams and apply to food decision making.

**OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES/IMPACTS**

1. This year we have continued to refine and develop the curricula and evaluation for the evidence based program, *Cooking Together for Family Meals*. This series of six weekly classes is designed to help middle-school age children and their parents work together to prepare quick, healthy and low-cost vegetable-rich meals and enjoy eating them together. These hands-on classes focus on adding a variety of vegetables such as dark leafy greens, winter squashes, cruciferous vegetables and beans to family meals. We are currently revising and refining the curriculum and evaluation tools based on the research findings, participant observation and feedback.

2. We are updating the CTFM logic/pathway model as part of planning for finalizing the curriculum and developing the leadership training program.

3. We have begun to develop an on-line instructional video about Collaborative Engaged Research (CER) which we expect to become part of the CTFM Leadership development/Training Program.

4. The Family and Community Food Decision Making website was expanded and updated: [http://familyfood.human.cornell.edu/](http://familyfood.human.cornell.edu/)

5. The leadership team for Building Food Systems and Health Leadership Capacity added to the scientific and useful understanding of ways to build capacity of community leaders to initiate and sustain sustainable food system partnerships for health and well-being. The project leadership team (Cornell faculty and County extension ED’s and nutrition program leaders) engaged in co-learning and co-creation of guidelines, methods, and tools which integrate research with extension/outreach and campus education initiatives. The findings included the following:

   - leadership for planned change requires flexibility and focus on the process as well as the outcomes
   - the importance of clarifying common and/or complimentary goals
the importance of understanding each partners priorities and limitations for themselves and their organizations
- different perspectives on the nature and expectations among partners
- the importance of creating and maintaining a safe and inclusive learning space
- the importance of making the learning community a priority by the participants and their supervisors
- Commitments and expectations for program delivery made it difficult to maintain participation.

6. The concept of "Change Leadership" for seeding and guiding changing food choices and eating practices was one outcome this year. We documented family members as change leaders and the roles different family members may play – decision makers or influencers at each stage of movement of food through the household.

Projects Completed in 2011
1. Building Leadership Capacity for Community Food System Collaborations. CUAES Smith-Lever, 2008-2011, $13,000

Funding was secured in 2011 for continuing these initiatives in food decision-making collaborative engaged research:

4. Enhancing Family and Community Capacity for Thoughtful Food Decision Making, proposed Oct 1, 2012 – Sept 30, 2015, $90,000 (under review)
5. Advancing Food Security and Viable Local Economies by Building Food-secure Family and Community Systems, USDA NIFA, AFRI, $5mil, denied.
6. The findings from the F&CFDM program informed the development and approval of the 5-year multi-state research project NC-1196.