

Sierra Torres & Nancy Buddington

Rethinking Local Food Systems: A Community Potluck and Discussion Tips for Giving this Workshop

Nancy's Tips

- 1) Organizers need a significant amount of lead time when searching for a venue that includes a kitchen/food prep area. Anytime food and especially prepared food is included, the organizer needs to make sure the board of health and food prep regulations are adhered to (servesafe, servesafe allergens food safety certification).
- 2) Marketing of the event is important with enough lead time to send out invitations, follow up on these invitations and attempt to get at least a rough count of potential attendees.
- 3) Compile a list of organizations whose members might be interested in attending the workshop or might have suggestions for other potential attendees.
- 4) Adhere to the schedule posted as closely as possible to honor attendees time commitment.
- 5) Do not get distracted by those attendees needing to leave early. Continue the schedule as posted to honor the other remaining attendees.

Sierra's Tips

- 6.) Start on time. Preset up the room in an intentional way so that participants know where to sit. Sitting in a circle could help participants focus on one another versus being spread out in a way where it is easy to get distracted /or have their backs to the group. Also make sure that you set up early enough so that participants can walk into the space feeling taken care and already predetermined for them.
- 7.) Include something personal in introductions to give them a space to share something about themselves and to get excited about the topic. For example, "what's your favorite thing to cook." Give people time to share but also make sure to guide it to each person in case someone goes off on a tangent.
- 8.) Be confident and draw everyone's attention. Assert yourself as the facilitator. Be gentle and welcoming but make sure you draw in the participant's attention.
- 9.) Come prepared. Over prepare your lesson plan, even if that means you don't cover it all. For example, it would have been beneficial to come with concrete definitions about what a food system is and what a local food system is printed out on the handout so that they can read along with you.
- 10.) Instead of standing and lecturing or popcorning, find ways to be more creative in the way you convey the information. For example, together go through what a food system is. Draw a

visual and have participants map out the food chain for one ingredient, maybe from a recipe you brought -- this demonstrates your points about why global food systems are so unsustainable without you having to just come out and say it. Then have participants break out into groups and map out the SAME ingredients but brainstorming how it would look in THEIR local food system, drawing on specific organizations and farms. Then come back as a group and have each team present. Make sure that each group is doing the same recipe/ingredients so that you can share resources. Then answer some of the reflection questions. For example, "tomatoes do not grow in the winter, so how can we get tomatoes for our dish?"

11.) Make sure your directions are clear. What is the goal for the participants? Convey that to them or else they will end up scattered in random discussion. It might be harder to convey the information you are trying to get them to understand.

12.) To close, make sure to go through each resource with the participants and refer to the packet so that it isn't just a sheet of paper that they end up not reading.