

“Farm to School” Pilot Program in Two Oregon School Districts

Preliminary Results Compiled by Ecotrust

Draft March 2009 – Please do not cite without written permission

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What: In 2007 the Kaiser Permanente Community Fund (at the Northwest Health Foundation) made a grant to Ecotrust to invest 7 cents per lunch served in two school districts: Portland Public Schools and Gervais Public Schools.

Why:

The primary goal of this pilot program is to promote the long-term health of children by making changes in their food environments at school and home so as to encourage students to adopt life-long healthy eating habits. Further, we seek to establish evidence-based rationale for public policy changes regarding school food. Finally, the proposed project seeks to contribute to the growing body of rigorous farm to school research in the context of social determinants of health in order to benefit communities in Oregon and beyond.

As a result of rigorous analysis, Ecotrust researchers will have real time data in hand to help the Oregon legislature imagine how farm to school and school garden legislation, specifically HB2800, could impact student health and the Oregon agricultural community. Additionally, we have the opportunity to test and refine operational procedures so as to streamline the implementation phase should the legislation pass in 2009.

Over what time frame:

- In Portland: approximately 102 lunch days during October 2008 – March 2009 (6 months)
- In Gervais: approximately 169 lunch days during Sept 2008 – June 2009 (full school year)

Approximate amount invested in each district:

In Portland: 20,500 meals per day (102 days) translates to \$146,370

In Gervais: 1,500 meals per day (169 days) translates to \$12,587

How similar to HB2800: Investing pennies per meal to stimulate increased purchases of local products.

How different: Only lunch (HB2800 is breakfast and lunch), only two districts (HB2800 is statewide), 7 cents for lunch (HB2800 is 15 cents for lunch and 7 cents for breakfast), limited period of time, no federal match, no grants to school gardens or other curricular enhancements (however select schools do support cafeteria changes with limited curricular activities)

On the ground: The two schools seized the opportunity to create ‘special promotions’ as described below, but funds were also targeted toward local purchases in general.

Harvest of the Month: An effort to serve locally sourced fruits and vegetables (fresh, frozen and canned) two times a month.

Local Lunch: An effort to serve a meal made entirely (except condiments) from local sources one time a month.

“Generic” local purchases: purchases not tied to any special program or promotion, but local nonetheless.

For a representative sample of Harvest of the Month, Local Lunches and generic local purchases, please see Attachment 1.

Portland:

- Largest district in the state.
- Metropolitan/urban focus.
- 87 total schools, pilot program funds applied k-12, approximately 20,500 lunches per day.
- Already committed to local buying, had been testing “farm to school” concepts for several years before pilot program investment was made.
- Used pilot program investment to expand buy local efforts.
- Tremendous community support with area grocery stores promoting Harvest of the Month and Local Lunches in situ.

Gervais:

- Small, rural district.
- Minimal farm to school activity prior to pilot program investment.
- 4 total schools, approximately 1500 lunches per day.
- Adopted a Harvest of the Month program.

Aggregated Analysis:

- Two districts
- 91 schools
- 22,000 lunches per day

Methodology Used for Economic Analysis

- Information regarding all local purchases during the time period Sept 15 – Dec 31, 2008 was collected from the two school districts.
- Researchers determined which purchases were inspired by the pilot program investment.
- Researchers calculated the total \$ value of purchases in 39 specific categories (see Attachment 2).
- Researchers conducted an input output analysis (IMPLAN) to describe commodity flows from producers to intermediate and final consumers and to calculate economic multiplier and job creation data.

Research Team:

- Deborah Kane, Vice President, Food & Farms, Ecotrust
- Michelle Markesteyn Ratcliffe, PhD, Farm to School Director, Ecotrust

- Sarah Kruse, PhD, Environmental Economist, Ecotrust
- Bruce Sorte, Oregon State University, Agricultural and Resource Economics Division

Preliminary Results over a 14 week period:

- Total pilot program investment: \$66,193
- Catalyzed: \$225,869 in local purchases
- Inspiring additional purchases of 241%
- Economic multiplier of 1.87 suggests that for every dollar of spending the program makes, it encourages an additional \$.87 of spending amongst suppliers and households.
- Affecting 401 of 409 sectors in the Oregon economy.

Types of Products/Programs

- Portland used the pilot program investment across multiple categories (fruits and veg, protein, grain, cheese).
- Portland expanded upon existing promotions (i.e. Harvest of the Month twice a month instead of once) and created a new promotion: Local Lunch.
- Gervais created Harvest of the Month focus, purchasing primarily fresh fruits and vegetables. Gervais greatly expanded the varieties of fruits and veg offered over previous year thanks to pilot program funds.
- Both school districts leveraged the investment to substitute locally produced items for items they'd been buying non locally (i.e. trade substitutions or inspired purchases).

Method of Procurement

- Portland used the pilot program investment to conduct direct purchases with local farmers AND to procure local products through mainstream distribution channels – thus signaling a preference for local procurement in diverse ways, influencing all aspects of the food system, not just direct market sales.
- Gervais focused primarily on direct purchases from farmers.
- At both schools new vendor relationships were formed.

Key Findings and Lessons:

- Schools that are just beginning to make local purchases will probably go for the lowest hanging fruit (no pun intended), i.e., fresh fruits and vegetables. Not only are these generally easy to source and substitute, local versions may sometimes be cheaper, and fresh fruits and vegetables are easy to promote to parents and the local community/media.
- Schools that have some experience with local purchasing will have the knowledge and background to move the funds into other categories, including center of the plate products such as meat, bread, and dairy.
- Smaller districts may find it convenient and beneficial to connect with local farmers directly, while larger districts may find it more convenient to go through their regular mainline distributor and specify a local preference.
- There IS a learning curve (e.g., Gervais has developed relationships with local farmers and worked to solve problems such as too many slugs in the romanesco and squished marionberries on the bottom of boxes). In the process, Gervais has also discovered cheap, sweet, delicious celery was available from a local farmer.
- Increased interest in local purchasing should lead to the creation of new products (school specific), such as local veggies pre-cut to certain sizes, and processed products such as

vegetarian chili (e.g. Portland Public Schools worked with Truitt Brothers Inc in Salem create a 3 bean chili for the lunch line).

- Serving locally grown fresh fruits and vegetables often involves more labor/time for lunch staff as they may be unfamiliar with and/or lack the proper equipment to properly prepare products.

Applying early lessons to HB 2800:

- A state investment will most certainly impact local fresh fruit and vegetable growers immediately.
- Over time, we can expect that certain local purchases will become institutionalized (as is the case with PPS and local grains, etc.) and that state funds will be used to purchase products in other categories such as protein, grain and dairy.
- A range of between 7 cents per meal (as in the pilot program) and 15 cents per meal (HB 2800) is needed as an incentive to try out new products and endure the added time and labor that may be necessary to find, prepare and serve them.
- Schools can easily funnel the money through a main food service distributor, and the more that these companies experience requests for local products, the more likely they are to expand their local purchases and product offerings (scale).

**Examples of Local Food Purchased with
Kaiser Permanente Community Fund Grant Money**
September 15 – December 31, 2008

Month	Menu/Food Item	Manufacturer	Vendor	Price per unit	# of units	Cost of Goods
Sept						
Harvest Item (Gervais)	Peaches	Jones Farm	Jones Farm	\$16.50	5	\$82.50
Harvest Item (Gervais)	Tomatoes	Jones Farm	Jones Farm	\$0.99	62	\$61.38
Harvest Item (Gervais)	Cantaloupe	Jones Farm	Jones Farm	\$0.42	171	\$71.82
Harvest Item (Gervais)	Broccoli	Jones Farm	Jones Farm	\$0.59	30	\$17.70
Harvest Item (Gervais)	Cauliflower	Jones Farm	Jones Farm	\$0.59	10	\$5.90
Harvest Item (Gervais)	Plums	Jones Farm	Jones Farm	\$17.00	3	\$51.00
Harvest Item (Gervais)	Apples	Jones Farm	Jones Farm	\$10.00	7	\$70.00
Harvest Item (Gervais)	Watermelon	Jones Farm	Jones Farm	\$0.39	180	\$70.20
Harvest Item (Portland)	Cucumber	Pacific Coast	Pacific Coast	\$28.00	36	\$1,008.00
Oct						
Harvest Item (Gervais)	Apples	Jones Farm	Jones Farm	\$10.00	26	\$260.00
Harvest Item (Gervais)	Corn on cob	Jones Farm	Jones Farm	\$0.25	400	\$100.00
Harvest Item (Gervais)	Cucumbers	Jones Farm	Jones Farm	\$0.80	175	\$140.00
Harvest Item (Gervais)	Berries	Jones Farm	Jones Farm	\$16.00	42	\$672.00
Harvest Item (Gervais)	Tomatoes	Jones Farm	Jones Farm	\$0.99	90	\$89.10
Harvest Item (Gervais)	Cauliflower	Jones Farm	Jones Farm	\$0.59	25	\$14.75
Harvest Item (Gervais)	Broccoli	Jones Farm	Jones Farm	\$0.59	20	\$11.80
Harvest Item (Gervais)	Watermelon	Jones Farm	Jones Farm	\$0.39	145	\$56.55
Harvest Item (Gervais)	Cantaloupe	Jones Farm	Jones Farm	\$0.42	30	\$12.60
Harvest Item (Portland)	Corn on cob	Schlechter Farms	Schlechter	\$17.50	199	\$3,482.50
Harvest Item (Portland)	Corn on cob	Pacific Coast	Pacific Coast	\$12.00	172	\$2,064.00
Local Lunch	Quesadilla	Don Poncho	FSA	\$11.75	405	\$4,758.75
Local Lunch	Shredded Cheddar	Tillamook	FSA	\$54.33	162	\$8,801.46
Local Lunch	Salsa	Pacific Coast	Pacific Coast	\$27.00	84	\$2,268.00
Local Lunch	Butter for corn	Tillamook	FSA	\$13.91	28	\$389.48
Local Lunch	Tortilla Chips	Don Poncho	FSA	\$16.02	130	\$2,082.60
Local Lunch	Canned Pears	Truitt Brothers	FSA	\$29.29	270	\$7,908.30
Local Lunch	Red Apple	Pacific Coast	Pacific Coast			
Local Lunch	Milk		Alpenrose			

Nov						
Harvest Item (Gervais)	Table Grapes	Broadacres	Broadacres	\$1.00	500	\$500.00
Harvest Item (Portland)	Parsnip	Pacific Coast	Pacific Coast	\$24.00	255	\$6,120.00
Local Lunch	Baked Chicken Drumsticks w/ Pear Glaze	Draper Valley Chicken	SP Provision Meat Co.	\$39.60	220	\$8,712.00
Local Lunch	Roasted Carrots	Pacific Coast	Pacific Coast	\$10.58	116	\$1,227.28
Local Lunch	Canned Green Beans	Truitt Brothers	FSA	\$20.63	30	\$618.90
Local Lunch	Fresh Pears	Pacific Coast	Pacific Coast			
Local Lunch	Fresh Apples	Pacific Coast	Pacific Coast			
Local Lunch	Whole Wheat Rolls		Goodyman	\$1.46	8,779	\$12,817.34
Local Lunch	Milk		Alpenrose			

Dec						
Harvest Item (Gervais)	Romanesco Cauliflower	Happy Harvest Farm	Happy Harvest Farm	\$1.00	500	\$500.00
Harvest Item (Gervais)	Celery	Happy Harvest Farm	Happy Harvest Farm	\$0.70	40	\$28.00
Harvest Item (Gervais)	Green Beans	Truitt Brothers	Truitt Brothers	\$13.50	3	\$40.50
Harvest Item (Portland)	Cabbage	Pacific Coast	Pacific Coast	\$8.40	125	\$1,050.00

Other Illustrative Local Purchases						
	Bean and Rice	Organic Fresh	Organic Fresh	\$66.00	150	\$9,900.00
	Burrito Filling	Fingers	Fingers			
	Chicken	Truitt Brothers	Truitt Brothers	\$57.89	100	\$5,789.00
	Noodle Soup					
	Vegetable Stir Fry	Flavor Pac	Flavor Pac	\$33.17	200	\$6,634.00
	Canned Corn	NORPAC	NORPAC	\$24.05	100	\$2,405.00
	Vegetarian Chili	Truitt Brothers	Truitt Brothers	\$40.09	430	\$17,238.70
	Watermelon	Sam Pollock	Sam Pollock	\$5.00	1,830	\$9,150.00
	Fresh strawberries	Unger Farms	Unger Farms	\$12.50	671	\$8,387.50
	Fresh grapes	Unger Farms	Unger Farms	\$16.00	115	\$1,840.00

Sector Analysis

Sectors:

Oilseed farming
Grain farming
Vegetable and melon farming
Fruit farming
Tree nut farming
Sugarcane and sugar beet farming
All other crop farming
Cattle ranching and farming
Dairy cattle and milk production
Poultry and egg production
Animal production- except cattle and poultry
Commercial Fishing
Flour milling and malt manufacturing
Wet corn milling
Soybean and other oilseed processing
Fats and oils refining and blending
Breakfast cereal manufacturing
Sugar cane mills and refining
Beet sugar manufacturing
Chocolate and confectionery manufacturing
Nonchocolate confectionery manufacturing
Frozen food manufacturing
Fruit and vegetable canning
Fluid milk and butter manufacturing
Cheese manufacturing
Dry- condensed- and evaporated dairy product
Ice cream and frozen dessert manufacturing
Animal (except poultry and seafood) processing
Poultry processing
Seafood product preparation and packaging
Bread and bakery product manufacturing
Cookie- cracker- and pasta manufacturing
Tortilla manufacturing
Snack food manufacturing
Coffee and tea manufacturing
Flavoring syrup and concentrate manufacturing
Seasoning and dressing manufacturing
All other food manufacturing
Soft drink and ice manufacturing

Comments From the Front (Lunch) Line

Quotes from Portland Public School cafeteria staff on Local Lunch days



I just wanted to thank you for the wonderful lunch today. My kids loved it! I had classes come in to tell me “thank you for the great food.” It was extra work but so worth the smiles and thanks.

We watched as they emptied their plates, and asked kids how they liked lunch. “Excellent lunch!” More plates than usual were empty.

We had no left over corn. The kids went wild about it!

My students really enjoyed the “Local Lunch.” I tried to talk to them as they came through the salad bar and to tell them about all the items being local, where the fruit was grown etc. They were impressed.

The veggies were the surprise hit today! We had several kids from the last “parsnips” day that apparently took them thinking they were potatoes (even though we told them they were parsnips). Today those kids wanted to know “Can I have a little more?”

At first the kids weren’t too sure about the chicken because it looked different then it usually does, but they have come to trust Sandi so when she said try it, they did and really liked it. They were excited to see the parsnips again, too.

Hot green beans were a smash hit with many students coming back for seconds and even thirds in two cases. Several parents came for lunch and gave it rave reviews.



We told the student workers about the food being local today and the 7th graders were really excited, saying things like “Oh, good!”

Our students loved the local lunch. Some said, “Why can't we eat like this all the time?” The potatoes were a lot of work but yummy!

5th grade student Sydney states “it was by *far* the best lunch ever and that the grilled cheese was amazing and the parfaits were awesome.” Along with *lots* of “it was the best and when are we having it again” from all the kids!



It was fantastic, the kids liked the grilled cheese sandwich, many kids got seconds from the salad bar. They asked me, “When do we do that again?”

One student said grilled cheese sandwiches are “off the chain” and “off the hook” — which is good!

Our students want the local lunch every day.

Local Lunch Day at Portland Public Schools

February 25, 2009



On Any Other Day			On Local Lunch Day		
Item	Vendor	Price per serving	Item	Vendor	Price per serving
Chili	JTM (Ohio) USDA commodity beef	\$.45	Chili	Truitt Brothers Inc. Salem, OR	\$.56
Cheese	Land-O-Lakes (MN) USDA comm. cheese	\$.06	Cheese	Tillamook Cheese Tillamook, OR	\$.20
Salsa – canned	Rio Viejo (FSA Private Label)	\$.03	Salsa – fresh	Pacific Coast Fruit Co. Locally prepared	\$.14
Tortilla Chips	Mission (national brand) (FSA)	\$.06	Tortilla Chips	Don Poncho Salem, OR	\$.13
Blueberries	USDA commodity fruit	\$.01	Blueberries	Willamette Valley Fruit Salem, OR	\$.21
Pears	Pacific Coast Fruit Co. Location Unknown	\$.19	Pears	Walter Wells and Sons Hood River, OR	\$.28
Lettuce	Pacific Coast Fruit Co. Location Unknown	\$.04 no labor	Lettuce	Pacific Coast Fruit Co. Local Product	\$.01 labor
Cornbread	Clackamas Bakery	\$.16	Cornbread	Clackamas Bakery	\$.16
Total spent:	(\$20,500)	\$1.00	Total spent :	(\$34,645)	\$1.69
	Outside the state:	\$0.52		Outside the state:	\$0.00
	In-state vendors:	\$0.48		In-state vendors:	\$1.69
	In-state raw ingredients:	\$0.16		In-state raw ingredients:	\$1.69