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Bringing the Good Food Purchasing Program to Buffalo, Challenges and Lessons Learned

Michael Richbart

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Bringing the Good Food Purchasing Program to Buffalo, Challenges and Lessons Learned

Abstract

"The Good Food Purchasing Program (GFPP) builds on locally established community initiatives and goals to leverage institutional purchasing with the hope of transforming the food system. The program focuses on five core values: local economies, nutrition, a valued workforce, environmental sustainability, and animal welfare. The City of Buffalo shows tremendous potential to benefit from the GFPP. In the Buffalo Niagara region alone, "public institutions feed 163,000 public school students, 89,000 college students, and 6,000 correctional facility inmates each year—a total of 258,000 people." Los Angeles, California has demonstrated the positive effects that the GFPP has had on the local food system. In order to bring the program to the City of Buffalo a better understanding of the program is necessary. The goal of this report is to aid the organizations in Buffalo who are working to bring the GFPP to the city. The report does this by outlining the time and steps involved in the program, identifying opportunities and challenges, identifying lessons learned, and providing recommendations. "

Keywords

Environment, Health, Food, Civil Rights

Bringing the Good Food Purchasing Program to Buffalo, New York: Challenges and Lessons Learned

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Executive Summary

The Good Food Purchasing Program (GFPP) builds on locally established community initiatives and goals to leverage institutional purchasing with the hope of transforming the food system. The program focuses on five core values: local economies, nutrition, a valued workforce, environmental sustainability, and animal welfare.ⁱ The City of Buffalo shows tremendous potential to benefit from the GFPP. In the Buffalo Niagara region alone, “public institutions feed 163,000 public school students, 89,000 college students, and 6,000 correctional facility inmates each year—a total of 258,000 people.”ⁱⁱ

Los Angeles, California has demonstrated the positive effects that the GFPP has had on the local food system. In order to bring the program to the City of Buffalo a better understanding of the program is necessary. The goal of this report is to aid the organizations in Buffalo who are working to bring the GFPP to the city. The report does this by outlining the time and steps involved in the program, identifying opportunities and challenges, identifying lessons learned, and providing recommendations.

The Lessons Learned are as follows:

- Find Political/Internal Champions
- Improve Communication
- Explore Partnerships
- Emphasize Flexible and Aspirational Aspects of GFPP
- Build on Established Goals
- Discover Policy Windows

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	5
Problem Statement.....	5
Goals.....	6
Client.....	6
Assessment.....	7
Method and Data Sources.....	7
Overview of the GFPP.....	8
Timeline and Steps of GFPP.....	10
Challenges.....	13
1. Lack of Understanding.....	13
2. Funding.....	13
3. Coordination.....	13
4. Lack of Tracking.....	14
Lessons Learned.....	14
Find Political/Internal Champions.....	14
Improve Communication.....	14
Explore Partnerships.....	15
Emphasize Flexible and Aspirational Aspects of GFPP.....	15
Build on Established Goals.....	16
Discover Policy Windows.....	16
Recommendations.....	17
Conclusion.....	18

List of Figures

Figure 1:GFPP Values.....	9-10
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Introduction

Problem Statement

Institutional food purchasing policies can have a dramatic effect on the local economy and community. Every year public institutions spend billions of dollars on food purchasing in the United States.ⁱⁱⁱ In the Buffalo Niagara region alone, “public institutions feed 163,000 public school students, 89,000 college students, and 6,000 correctional facility inmates each year—a total of 258,000 people.”^{iv} This number is approximately one quarter of the regions total population and does not include private institutions.^v Despite the potential of the Buffalo Niagara region to support the local population through food production^{vi}, and despite the potential of the local food system to be an economic powerhouse (generates 4.16 billion annually), the system remains fractured and the benefits to the local economy and residents are not maximized.^{vii} Although farmers express a strong desire to support their local communities,^{viii} many struggle to do so economically. In 2007, 59 percent of farmers showed a net financial loss in the Buffalo Niagara region.^x Related to this, affordable healthy food options are limited and unhealthy food consumption leads to poor health and high obesity rates.^{xi} In Erie and Niagara County less than 28 percent of residents consume at least five servings of fruits and vegetables daily.^{xii}^{xiii}^{xiv}

Recent research on institutional purchasing has demonstrated the numerous benefits that institutional purchasing can create for the local community through health, economic, justice, animal welfare, and environmental considerations.^{xv} Farm to school programs are the most popular example of this. Regional institutional food procurement “helps participating farmers diversify their markets, increase off-season sales, and gain an outlet for surplus and/or less desirable foods.”^{xvi} Connecting farmers to institutional purchasing can make farming a more viable economic enterprise^{xvii} and keep farmers in business.^{xviii} Economically the money spent on food, remains in the region and can lead to the creation of jobs.^{xix} Practically, institutional purchasing from local farms provides healthier food for the many students and workers they feed.^{xx}

Despite the numerous possible benefits of institutional purchasing a focus on nutrition and local sourcing can leave “lacunas and sites of urgent concern

unaddressed.”^{xxi} The Good Food Purchasing Program (GFPP) seeks to overcome these gaps through emphasizing five core values: local economies, nutrition, a valued workforce, environmental sustainability, and animal welfare.^{xxii} Each of these values is supported in equal measure, without comprising the integrity of another.^{xxiii} The GFPP holds state and local governments accountable to use tax payer dollars to create a more just and connected food system that supports all Americans, focusing specifically on holistically supporting local food production.^{xxiv} This model has been adopted in multiple cities with a high degree of success.

Goals

The objective of this report is to identify challenges and lessons learned to overcome them, with the goal of helping local organizations understand the logistics, feasibility, and possibilities for GFPP in the city of Buffalo, New York. In order to identify challenges and lessons learned, a greater understanding of each step in the process is needed. Therefore the goals of this report are as follows:

1. Gain a better understanding of the steps, time, and scope of the program
2. Identify common challenges effecting the commitment, adoption, and implementation of the program
3. Identify lessons learned that have been used to successfully implement the GFPP. At the same, if possible, identify a case study where the program did not work or has not been effective

Client

This report is specifically provided for the Massachusetts Avenue Project and Grassroots Garden WNY who are the lead organizations working to bring the Good Food Purchasing Program to Buffalo. In its scope, the information is relevant to any city interested in the program, including the city of Niagara Falls, New York.

The Massachusetts Avenue Project (MAP) was started by neighborhood residents on Buffalo’s West Side in 1992, and led to the completion of a playground in 1994.^{xxv} In 1998 the first paid staff was hired for a neighborhood community center, and in 2000 MAP was incorporated. Early on MAP focused on community gardening, but expanded in 2003 through Growing Green to address “growing land vacancy, high youth

unemployment and food security needs of the community.”^{xxvi} Since then “MAP has employed and trained over 450 low-income youth, ages 14 to 20.”^{xxvii} Over the years MAP has been involved in food assessments, the creation of the Buffalo-Erie Food Policy Council (FPC) in 2013, the creation of Health Kids Health Communities-Buffalo (HKHC- Buffalo) in 2009, and many other policy and legislative efforts.^{xxviii} Today MAP operates a Growing Green Urban Farm providing hands-on training and education for youth employees.^{xxix} MAP also operates a Growing Green Mobile market to provide affordable and healthy food combined with education in low-income areas.^{xxx} MAP accepts, cash, Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program benefits (SNAP), Women Infant and Children (WIC) vouchers, and Farmers’ Market Nutrition checks at both the mobile market and farm stand.^{xxxi}

Grassroots Garden WNY (GGWNY) was founded in 1995 by Milton Zeckhauser.^{xxxii} During the first ten years the organization acted as a facilitator to gain access to city-owned vacant lots, providing only basic materials to the gardens.^{xxxiii} In 2010, GGWNY added staff, and started to focus on capacity building, community organizing, environmental justice, food access, and nutrition.^{xxxiv} Today there are over 100 gardens throughout the city of Buffalo and Niagara Falls, consisting of roughly 2,000 gardeners from 30 cultural backgrounds growing 30,000lbs of fresh free produce.^{xxxv} The gardens are maintained and managed by the local community. Many neighborhoods grow produce, but they are not required to, in order to participate in the GGWNY’s programming.^{xxxvi} Gardens are more than suppliers of food; they are places for connection, organization, and escape.^{xxxvii} GGWNY plays an important role is grassroots organization, local ownership, city revitalization, and access to healthy food. Currently GGWNY is working to engage students in Buffalo through the Buffalo Sprouts, Seedling Stewards, and Pollinator programs.^{xxxviii}

Assessment

Method and Data Sources

The information gathered for this report is qualitative deriving mainly from three semi-structured interviews each lasting about an hour long. See interview instrument in

appendix (A). Interviews were conducted with a representative from the Center for Good Food Purchasing (CGFP) located in Berkeley, California, a representative from the Chicago Food Policy Action Council (CFPAC), and a representative from the Los Angeles Food Policy Council (LAFPC). The interviewees are all involved in the implementation, adoption, or expansion of the GFPP. All interviews were scheduled with the help of a representative from the CGFP and a representative from the Food Chain Workers Alliance (FCWA). The conversations were recorded to ensure the accuracy of the information gathered.

The interview material is supplemented by secondary sources looking at case studies from various cities, most notably Los Angeles and Chicago. Los Angeles, California is the first and longest example of the Good Food Purchasing Program; the City of Los Angeles and the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) adopted the program in 2012. It therefore has the most opportunity for lessons learned. However, because the GFPP was started in Los Angeles, some of the information is not applicable to other cities. To fill in this gap, Chicago, Illinois is used as an example of a city outside of California. Although the GFPP policy has not yet been adopted, Chicago has already completed a pilot program and most likely will be the first outside of California to adopt the policy. As the GFPP expands outside of California, Chicago stands to be the model exemplar going forward. This is significant for Buffalo, New York as both are located within the Rust Belt.

The assessment of the information will be organized into five sections: Overview of the GFPP, Opportunities, Timeline and Steps, Challenges, and Lessons Learned. The information in these sections is a synthesis of the information provided in the interviews and secondary sources. The research made it clear that each city will campaign, adopt, and implement the GFPP differently. Therefore the lessons highlighted in this report are meant to serve as a guide to success, and not a blueprint for success.

Overview of the GFPP

In 2010 President Barack Obama signed the Healthy, Hungry-Free Kids Act (HHFKA) into law, which expanded federal regulations to improve nutrition standards and funding for school lunches.^{xxxix} The most well-known change is the power to regulate food sold on school campuses regardless of the time of day.^{xl} In 2015 HHFKA

expired, since then federal legislation and grassroots efforts have attempted to reinforce and build upon the progress made through HHFKA.^{xli} The Good Food Purchasing Program can be seen as one such attempt created by the LA Food Policy Council in 2012.^{xlii} The council brought together a coalition of stakeholders and professionals focused on implementing a value-driven food procurement model based on five core principles (see figure 1 below).^{xliii} In October 2012 the LA city council unanimously approved the program. Only a few weeks later the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) also adopted the GFPP.

The success of the program in LA brought about the creation of the Center for Good Food Purchasing (CGFP) in 2015, in order to apply the framework to institutions across the United States.^{xliv} The framework was created using feedback from “nearly 100 national, state, and local food systems experts.”^{xlv} The CGFP goal is to create a national network of Good Food Purchasers in order to transform the current food system by leveraging institutional purchasing. The center provides compliance planning and protocols for the institutions involved.^{xlvi} The progress of institutions can be tracked through a scoring system; grading is based on a star rating 1-5.^{xlvii} Each of the five values is given a baseline standard, which represents that an institution has met higher-than-average industry standards in its sourcing efforts.^{xlviii} In order to formally adopt the program, an institution must meet at least the baseline standards for all values. Each value has three levels; by meeting the criteria in each increasing level more points can be earned.^{xlix} GFPP benchmarks often incorporate third-party certifications.¹ Bonus points can be earned, but do not count toward baseline measures.

Because the GFPP’s benchmarks and standards are organized around five core values it is important to know how those values are defined. Figure 1 below outlines the CGFP’s vision for each value. The emphasis and method in each city will be different, but the vision for each category remains the same.

Figure 1: GFPP Values

<u>Value</u>	<u>Vision</u>
Local Economies	Support small and mid-sized agricultural and food processing operations within the local area or region.

Nutrition	Promote health and well-being by offering generous portions of vegetables, fruit, whole grains and minimally processed foods, while reducing salt, added sugars, saturated fats, and red meat consumption, and eliminating artificial additives. Improving equity, affordability, accessibility, and consumption of high quality culturally relevant Good Food in all communities is central to our focus on advancing Good Food purchasing practices.
Valued Workforce	Provide safe and healthy working conditions and fair compensation for all food chain workers and producers from production to consumption.
Environmental Sustainability	Source from producers that employ sustainable production systems that reduce or eliminate synthetic pesticides and fertilizers; avoid the use of hormones, routine antibiotics and genetic engineering; conserve soil and water; protect and enhance wildlife habitats and biodiversity; and reduce on-farm energy and water consumption, food waste and greenhouse gas emissions; and increase menu options that have lower carbon and water footprints.
Animal Welfare	Provide healthy and humane care for farm animals.

Source: Center For Good Food Purchasing. 2017. “Values.” http://goodfoodpurchasing.org/program-overview/#_values. Information organized by author.

Timeline and Steps of GFPP

One of the greatest strengths of the GFPP is that it “can be implemented on a place-based rather than an institution-sector basis.”^{li} A coalition can work to get the program-adopted city wide, instead of just with particular institutions. Organizations or groups interested in the GFPP do not have to be connected to an institution to form a coalition. There is a lot of information on institutional steps to adopt the GFPP, but not much about the role of the coalition.

Early on in the process an interested organization can arrange for a GFPP webinar led by representatives from the Food Chain Workers Alliance. All stakeholders are invited to attend. If there is enough interest a coalition is formed. A good portion of the time during an active campaign involves answering questions, making connections, exploring institutional options (where is there leverage), and ensuring that all five value categories are represented in the coalition. A coalition may take a long time (Chicago

took 6 months) to adjust GFPP standards and percentages, but it may be more useful to focus less time on adaptation and more on implementation.^{lii} Once a relationship is formed with an institution, pre-assessments or informal “baseline assessments of existing purchases” can be conducted.^{liii} Pre-assessments help the institution and the coalition to understand where opportunities for the GFPP lie.^{liiv} In order to progress towards policy adoption, internal champions must be involved. The programs in Oakland, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Chicago were all led or directly endorsed by a food policy council, securing the local food policy council’s support appears to be a necessary step.

Before committing fully to the GFPP an institution can pilot the program. This is often done in order to understand the logistics for the next contract.^{liv} When an institution formally adopts the GFPP they commit to meet baselines standards, develop supply chain transparency over time, incorporate standards into Requests for Proposals (RFPs) and contracts, and pledge compliance in CGFP verification.^{lvi} Once an institution is on board, they must take the initiative to obtain the necessary records.^{lvii} When purchasing data is received, the CGFP provides a baseline assessment. After the assessment, the center works with the institution to develop a plan to meet baseline levels and provide technical assistance. The center tracks the institutions progress and awards a star rating. If baseline standards are met and the policy is formally adopted, the institution will be recognized as a participating institution.^{lviii}

Oakland and San Francisco, California are two cities that took different paths to incorporate the GFPP. San Francisco conducted minimal research and assessment before adoption. They instead focused on getting an “easy win” through their connection with two elected public school board members.^{lix} In May 2016, the San Francisco Unified School District adopted the program after only two months.^{lx} If there had been push back by the food service division it would have been more difficult. In San Francisco’s case the adoption was quick but the implementation and data collection will take longer.^{lxi} Oakland on the other hand took two years before achieving policy adoption in November 2016. Implementation and data collection will proceed quicker.^{lxii}

The timeline for policy adoption is around 2 ½ to 3 years depending on the location.^{lxiii} The full implementation of the program involves a long-term approach, ten plus years.^{lxiv} Chicago launched its coalition in January 2015 at the annual food policy

summit and formal adoption is expected next fall by the Chicago School District.^{lxv}

Opportunities

The GFPP in Los Angeles has proven the benefits that institutional purchasing can have on all five value categories in less than five years. Since 2012, the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) has redirected 12 million dollars to purchase local produce, provides healthier bread free of high fructose corn syrup influencing over 550 schools across the Western United States, created 150 new jobs, saved 19.6 million gallons of water, and awarded 20 million dollars in contracts for chicken produced without routine antibiotics. For further information refer to Appendix (B).

Perhaps the most skepticism of GFPP's success in Los Angeles as a nationwide model is that so far only cities in California have adopted it. California's 2015 large farming revenue (47 billion), over 77,000 farms, and farm receipts capturing nearly 15 percent of the national total can be intimidating.^{lxvi} Although California's agriculture capacity is one reason why Los Angeles was able to achieve such rapid and large-scale results, the GFPP can be incorporated at any scale.^{lxvii} It is important to adapt the program to the local or regional context; it is an incremental program.^{lxviii} In 2012, New York State farms sold more than \$5.4 billion in agricultural commodity sales.^{lxix} If agriculture, including agricultural production, supply services, manufacturing, and industry linkages are considered, New York State represents a \$53.7 billion industry with over 200,000 jobs.^{lxx} In 2007, the Buffalo-Niagara region alone sold \$221 million in agricultural products.^{lxxi} The region appears more than capable of implementing the GFPP and using the GFPP to improve the regional food system.

Chicago will most likely be the first city outside of California to formally adopt the Good Food Purchasing Policy.^{lxxii} Going forward Chicago's implementation of the program and impact assessment will be valuable to all cities involved in the program. Chicago is significant to Buffalo, New York because both are part of the Rust Belt and have large food processing sectors. The Buffalo-Niagara Region "is home to 252 food processors employing 6,010 people and making approximately \$1.8 billion in annual sales."^{lxxiii} One opportunity for Buffalo, like Chicago, is to prioritize local processors and processed goods in GFPP standards.^{lxxiv}

Challenges

Challenges to the expansion of the GFPP are not because of lack of interest, as demand is exceeding the CGFP's capacity.^{lxxv} Since the creation of the CGFP, so far no city has failed with implementing the GFPP.^{lxxvi} It is surprising to note that no city that has approached the center has struggled to make an institutional connection. Cincinnati, Ohio does not have a formal connection yet, but is focusing first on coalition building.^{lxxvii} Cities who approach the center are usually already working towards GFPP values and have networks and connections already in place. Many challenges are context specific, but four general ones are identified below.

1. Lack of Understanding

By far the most common challenge identified was a lack of understanding about the GFPP. Stakeholders involved who did not fully understand what the GFPP is or have unanswered questions about it are hesitant to support it in any way. It may take multiple tries to explain the program or require persistence from the coalition leaders.^{lxxviii} Institutions may think that a pre-assessment is meant to point out how bad they are doing when in actuality its not "a pass/fail" inquiry, but purely to get a better understanding of where they are at currently.^{lxxix} Institutions also want to know, "how will this help us?"^{lxxx} Part of the role of the CFGP is to empower coalitions to talk with institutions.^{lxxxi}

2. Funding

Buying local and nutritious food is often more expensive. Institutions fear that buying local and nutritious food is not possible within a strict budget.^{lxxxii} However, there are usually ways to minimize the cost, like "meatless Mondays" or smaller portion sizes. See appendix (C) for more strategies to offset cost. Funding for data collection and GFPP verification are also challenges that need to be thought out.

3. Coordination

The GFPP requires a lot of coordination and time.^{lxxxiii} It is important to plan ahead and think about who is going collect the data? Who will provide the work needed for collecting data?^{lxxxiv} Who will lead the coalition? How will it accommodate all the voices at the table?

4. Lack of Tracking

During pre-assessments or baseline assessments some vendors may not be able to track where their food comes from.^{lxxxv} In these cases the first step may just be to keep track of purchases. The “secret sauce” of some vendors is proprietary contracts.^{lxxxvi} The contract may stipulate that the vendor does not have to disclose certain pieces of information like workers wages or growing locations.

Lessons Learned

During the GFPP webinar three keys to success are given: multi-sectorial coalitions, grassroots, and political champions. Besides this information, best practices, lessons learned, and strategies are hard to find. Next year the Union for Concerned Scientists will release a report on best practices.^{lxxxvii}

Find Political/Internal Champions

Perhaps the most important factor in the success of all of the cities so far is an internal champion. Los Angeles had support from the mayor, San Francisco from two elected school board members, Oakland from the school district, and Chicago from the parks district and mayors office.^{lxxxviii} The GFPP works best with an inside/outside approach, gaining support from both sides.^{lxxxix} Finding political champions or internal champions is most effective when drawing from relationships already established.^{xc} Coalitions should be patient when forming these relationships, allowing time for a “really good understanding.”^{xc} Having support from a mayor’s office makes the process much easier. For example, in Chicago because of support from the mayor’s office, support from the city council has not yet been needed.^{xcii}

Improve Communication

A major part of active campaigning is forming a diverse/multi-sectorial coalition.^{xciii} Chicago’s success thus far is founded in large part on their coalition consisting of over 30 organizations, representing all five value categories.^{xciv} A diverse coalition ensures that all voices are heard. It is important that the people you want to benefit are present and are prepared to participate.^{xcv} In order to avoid misunderstandings taking time to answer all questions, addressing individual concerns, and being patient are key.^{xcvi} Since cost is often a main concern, understanding all costs involved and

opportunities for grants or part-time staff is crucial. It is important to engage multiple institutions, creating multiple pressure points, ultimately to influence food vendor practices.^{xcvii}

Explore Partnerships

Finding partnerships is another key to the success of GFPP. Perhaps one of the best examples is in Los Angeles between the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) and the summer lunch program run by the City Rec and Parks Department.^{xcviii} The city parks department sourced their summer lunches through LAUSD because they already met GFPP standards. Further, if institutions share vendors, partnerships allow them to leverage their purchasing power.^{xcix} A dual city approach would have many of these benefits. Denver, Colorado is one area taking a multiple city approach.

Emphasize Flexible and Aspirational Aspects of GFPP

In the words of one representative from the Los Angeles Food Policy Council (LAFPC), the “flexibility of the program is its greatest strength.”^c The program should be adapted to the city to ensure the goals of the community. An institution does not need to focus on all five value categories all at once, it only needs to meet baselines requirements in all five.^{ci} The program is meant to troubleshoot, not be constricting.^{cii} Measures and benchmarks can be adjusted based on the local context. For example Chicago changed the definition of local from 200 miles to 250.^{ciii} Claire Stoscheck has written a very helpful paper on adapting the GFPP standards to the Twin Cities, which is also applicable to many locations.^{civ} Currently GFPP standards are under revision and will be released this fall (2017).^{cv} Because new standards are being released, taking a lot of time adjusting the percentages to the local context may not be the best use of time, until new standards are released. The GFPP framework is not rigid, but provides a platform to work from.^{cvi}

The program is also aspirational and voluntary.^{cvii} Accordingly, “the program is incremental...changes are not expected overnight.” So far no institution has failed to meet baselines requirements. Because of this Shoscheck (2016) suggests increasing the difficulty of baseline standards.^{cviii} It may be surprising how much food actually comes from the local area.^{cix} This is amplified if you include processors

and don't look exclusively at produce.^{cx} By emphasizing the flexible and aspirational aspects of GFPP institutions and vendors will be more likely to participate. For example, in Chicago there are only a limited number of school food suppliers. It is important to not price them out. Simply by setting the standards where the vendors are at provides a floor so that even a one percent increase every year would be significant.^{cx1}

Build on Established Goals

Another main reason for the success of GFPP is a coalition's ability to build on established goals. The five values of the GFPP allow coalitions to engage institutions who are working on any one of the values.^{cxii} The most common established goals are related to nutrition. In Austin, Texas the coalition has gained support from the Office of Sustainability who is already involved in a Farm to School Program.^{cxiii} In Chicago the GFPP is seen as an opportunity to continue the work being done with minority farmers.^{cxiv} Chicago is also incorporating the GFPP into the districts Wellness Policy.^{cxv} It is important to find commonality and build on the work already being done in creative ways.

One way to do this is to incorporate the GFPP into the regions comprehensive plan.^{cxvi} The Buffalo Niagara region can build momentum for the GFPP by linking the One Region Forward plan to the GFPP. In 2015, the *Growing Together* report was created in order to inform the One Region Forward plan. Almost half of the policy suggestions in the "ideas for the future" section can be linked to the GFPP in some way.^{cxvii} The more commonality found, the more successful the coalition will be. Building on established goals can be as simple as changes in menus or finding products that meet multiple value categories.^{cxviii}

Discover Policy Windows

Based on John Kingdon's concept of streams (problem, political, and policy stream), a policy window opens "when simultaneously a problem is recognized, a solution is available, and the political climate is positive for change..."^{cxix} Success for the GFPP has come when all three policy streams are operating. Most importantly to GFPP's success is the political stream. Chicago's push for the GFPP overlapped with the last

mayoral election, both candidates agreed to support the policy.^{cxx} It is important to research political platforms, and use transitions to support the GFPP.^{cxxi} One of the main accountability pieces for politicians and institutions is momentum and public recognition, so it is important to highlight accomplishments. Another example from Chicago is the school districts wellness policy. The policy is updated every three years, and it was during this process when the GFPP was easily incorporated. Vendor contract expirations are also important to know. Finding a policy window is about leverage and strategy. Incorporating GFPP accountability and verification costs into larger contracts can be considered a best practice.

Recommendations

Buffalo, New York has tremendous potential to incorporate the GFPP. Based on the lessons learned from other cities undertaking the GFPP, the following recommendations are distilled:

1. Use established nutritional goals to work with the school system. The wellness policy is one fruitful avenue.
2. Link the GFPP with goals of the region's comprehensive plan.
3. Make the GFPP a joint effort between Niagara Falls and Buffalo, New York. Research opportunities to leverage contracts in both areas. The local context will be different, but the momentum and political recognition is important.
4. Work to get the Food Policy Council of Buffalo and Erie County to endorse the program. Most progress has been made with the support of the local food policy council.
5. Work to get mayoral support before the election. Having the mayor's support has proven to be effective. Buffalo's next election is in November 2017.
6. Prioritize locally processed goods in GFPP standards and when approaching institutions.

Conclusion

The GFPP offers the Buffalo Niagara region an opportunity to strengthen the local food system holistically through value-based institutional purchasing. The GFPP has the opportunity to improve the local economy, make farming a viable career, improve the health of residents, and much more. By engaging institutions across the nation, multiple pressure points are created on the nations food system with the goal of ultimately transforming the entire food system through value-based institutional purchasing.^{cxxv} Despite the time, effort, coordination, and many challenges in bringing the GFPP to the city of Buffalo, a policy window is opening. In Kingdon's terms, a problem is recognized and a solution is available. It is now up to the organizations interested in the GFPP to form a diverse coalition, explore partnerships, locate internal champions, and create a political climate ready for change. The goal of this report was to play a small part in that process.^{cxxvi}

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Appendix A

Interview Questions:

1. Can you tell me a little about yourself, your role here at [insert organization name] and your involvement in the Good Food Purchasing Program?
2. What is the timetable from the first meeting to discuss the GFPP, to the formation of a coalition, to policy implementation? What aspect took the longest?
3. What do you consider the most important reasons why GFPP was successful in your location?
4. What major challenges arose during the formation of the coalition and how did you overcome them?
5. What major challenges arose during the campaign phase of the program that made policy adoption difficult? How did you overcome them?
6. If you could re-do any aspect of the implementation process differently, what would you change? Lessons learned?
7. What advice would you give to organizations trying to bring GFPP to the City of Buffalo? Best practices?
8. Where did you find the most leverage with public institutions?
9. What benefits did the program bring to the local community since its adoption?
10. What do you think about a bi-regional approach?

Appendix B

Figure 2: Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) Impact

<u>Value</u>	<u>Impact</u>
Local Economies	45 million annual servings of bread made with sustainable, locally grown, California-grown wheat. \$12 million re-directed to purchase local produce.
Nutrition	Healthier, reformulated products, including lower-sodium bread products made without high fructose corn syrup. Gold Star Foods distributes these same products to over 550 schools across the Western United States.
Valued Workforce	150 new well-paying food chain jobs created in Los Angeles County, including food processing, manufacturing and distribution. Contributed to higher wages and improved working conditions for 160 truck drivers in LAUSD’s supply chain. LAUSD School Board adopted a resolution calling on a major California grower, to honor its union contract with the United Farm Workers, representing 5,000 farm workers due to the Good Food Purchasing Program commitment.
Environmental Sustainability	Estimated 19.6 million gallons of water saved each week by implementing “Meatless Mondays.” \$20 million five-year contract awarded for chicken produced free of routinely administered antibiotics. Before, the contract always went to the lowest bidder. This time around the district prioritized poultry suppliers that encompassed the Good Food Purchasing values.
Animal Welfare	15% decrease in meat spend due to implementing Meatless Mondays

Source: Center For Good Food Purchasing. “faq,” <http://goodfoodpurchasing.org/faq-items/what-impact-has-the-good-food-purchasing-policy-had-on-supply-chain-practices-in-places-where-it-has-been-implemented-already/> also Policy Link, 2016, “Gold Star Case Study.” No longer available.

Appendix C

Strategies for offsetting increased costs include:

- Re-designing menus to incorporate less meat and processed food;
- Buying produce in season;
- Creating direct relationships with suppliers;
- Partnering with other food purchasing departments or institutions to leverage purchasing volume;
- Increasing sustainable food purchases incrementally;
- Purchasing foods from produce aggregation hubs (Regional Food Hubs);
- Increasing water and energy efficiency (e.g. by eliminating trays); and
- Buying lower on the beauty chain (e.g., smaller and less aesthetically perfect produce) is less expensive and helps farmers sell more of what they grow.

Source: Los Angeles Food Policy Council, 2014. “Purchasing Guidelines for Food Service Institutions.” http://www.thegreenhorns.net/wp-content/files_mf/1396804772goodfood.pdf
