

MEMO: Rationale for a Good Food Purchasing Policy for Madison

Date: April 13th, 2017

To: Board of Health, Madison and Dane County

From: Healthy Marketing and Procurement Work Group, Madison Food Policy Council

On March 24, 2015, the Mayor and the Madison Common Council passed a Resolution directing the Madison Food Policy Council to draft a “Good Food Procurement” policy for healthy vending options, healthy menus, and entrees for all city-owned and operated vending, including but not limited to vending and catering contracts with the City, and to report the draft back to the Common Council at such time for public review. Towards that end, the food policy council created the Healthy Marketing and Procurement Group.

The Healthy Marketing and Procurement Group has researched a variety of procurement policies in other states and municipalities, and studied the specified standards required by the Los Angeles policy. The Group also met with various leaders and stakeholders concerning the possibility of a Madison Food Procurement Policy.

Previously, members of the Committee had met with representatives of UW Health to learn about details concerning its food procurement policy, and the enforcement efforts it is taking. Members also met with representatives of Monona Terrace to gather its views on a potential procurement policy. Alexia Kulwicz (Healthy Marketing and Procurement and Work Group Chair) also met with a procurement officer to begin the potential for such a policy. Members of the working group have also met with Alexa Delwiche of the Center for Good Food Purchasing. The Center is a relatively new, national organization, designed to provide services including analyzing food providers under Good Food Standards, and assisting municipalities and other institutions in administration and enforcement of their Good Food Policies.

Initially, at least some members of the working group were interested in a more rigorous policy, with greater definition, similar to stringent standards set in Los Angeles.

On further review, and after our research into procurement policies elsewhere, and meeting with various organizations, the working group recommends beginning with a more basic approach. The group recommends starting with passage of a policy containing five values that the City will strive to observe:

1. Local Economies
2. Environmental Sustainability
3. Valued Workforce
4. Animal Welfare
5. Nutrition

These five value categories are based on procurement policies elsewhere, and what the working group believes represents a beginning toward procuring “Good Food.”

The Working Group is also considering a pilot program, and will be discussing this at further meetings, with City Staff input. In addition, the group is continuing to discuss opening the working group to a wider representation, potentially including the County, local institutional food buyers, and groups representing community needs.

While initially the group was considering passage of a policy to use as a model for other institutions, it is now looking to potentially build a broader coalition to develop a workable procurement policy together. The Working Group has also begun the process of collecting food purchasing data from the City, building towards completing a baseline assessment on purchasing volume and vendor choices.

Sincerely,

George Reistad
Food Policy Coordinator,
City of Madison

Alexia Kulwiec
Chair,
Healthy Marketing and Procurement Work Group