



## HOD MEMBER FACT SHEET: Sustainable Food Supply

**BIG QUESTION: WHAT IS THE ROLE OF DIETETICS PROFESSIONALS IN SUPPORTING A SUSTAINABLE FOOD SUPPLY THAT IS HEALTHFUL AND SAFE?**

### THE CHALLENGE

- The multifaceted relationships of nutrition and agriculture: Balancing health with our food supply, consumers' level of financial, time and social commitment to make a difference, and the economics of farming -the social and political impact.
- What needs to be done so that dietetics professionals recognize that sustainability is about the impact of choices on the environment, food distribution systems, quality of life, and the viability of local and international communities?

### WHAT WE KNOW

- A safe, sustainable, and nutritious food supply is one of ADA's priorities.
- However, a survey of dietetics professionals found that only 43 percent of respondents had heard of sustainable agriculture.
- Farmers, consumers and agricultural policy impact a sustainable food system.
- U.S. public policy defines sustainable agriculture encompassing broad goals, including: more profitable farm income; promotion of environmental stewardship, including protecting and improving soil quality, reduce dependence on nonrenewable resources such as fuel and synthetic fertilizers and pesticides, and minimize adverse impacts on safety, wildlife, water quality and other environment resources; and promotion of stable, prosperous farm families and communities. The diverse groups working toward sustainability frequently do not agree on which goals are most important.
- A portion of a sustainable food system is organically grown foods. The trend for usage is increasing. However, consumers do not know enough about how their food is grown, processed, transported, or sold.
- Americans and citizens of the world's most prosperous countries enjoy the advantages of a rich, nutritious and inexpensive array of foods. Locally grown



and organic foods may cost more making food less accessible to those with lower incomes unless assistance programs and policies are combined with technology development.

- In terms of the US grocery cart, imported produce, account for a growing proportion of consumers purchases.
- Consumers are interested in local foods because of perceived benefits including: freshness; great taste; high quality; improved flavor; more variety and more of dollars to the farmer/community.
- Consumers are able to change the way food is produced, processed, transported, or sold through their purchasing decisions.
- Policies such as taxes, commodity programs or trade policy are critical for meeting sustainability goals.
- The Farm Bill supports farmers and provides for programs such Food Stamps, WIC, and Commodity Supplemental Food Program.

#### WEBLIOGRAPHY

- [www.foodroutes.org/doclib/25/Demands\\_for\\_LocalProduce.pdf](http://www.foodroutes.org/doclib/25/Demands_for_LocalProduce.pdf).
- [www.sustainableagriculture.net/primer.php](http://www.sustainableagriculture.net/primer.php).
- [www.foodchange.org/nutrition/schoolfood.html](http://www.foodchange.org/nutrition/schoolfood.html).

**LET US HEAR FROM YOU-** Please share your thoughts on the following with your delegate. All comments should be submitted by **October 12, 2005**.



1. What questions did you have as you read the backgrounder?
2. What skills and knowledge do dietetics professionals need to support, promote and educate the public on a sustainable food supply?
3. What currently exists (i.e., Farmers Market, food policy council, markets, restaurants) in your locality related to a sustainable food supply?

#### DELEGATE CONTACT INFORMATION

Provide your responses and comments to Carlene Russell, Delegate at

[russellg56@mchsi.com](mailto:russellg56@mchsi.com) or Jan Fisher, Delegate-elect at [bsf5021@mchsi.com](mailto:bsf5021@mchsi.com)

For more information on this topic, visit "HOD Backgrounder: The Role of Dietetics Professionals in Supporting a Sustainable Food Supply that Is Healthful and Safe" using the following link [www.eatright.org/Member/85\\_22575.cfm](http://www.eatright.org/Member/85_22575.cfm)