



Wednesday, November 16, 2011
9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Buehler Alumni & Visitors Center, University of California, Davis

Overview and Summary

On November 16, 2011, leaders and stakeholders convened at the Buehler Alumni & Visitors Center, University of California, Davis for the Solano and Yolo Counties Joint Economic Summit. The objective was to engage farmers, processors, bankers, government and academia in discussion to identify the opportunities and challenges to adding more value to agriculture. They identified key strategies and actions necessary to move forward.

The meeting was kicked off with welcoming remarks from Dr. Neal Van Alfen, Dean of the School of Agriculture at UC Davis, Yolo County Supervisor Duane Chamberlain and Solano County Supervisor John Vasquez. The meeting was wrapped by Solano County Supervisor Mike Reagan and Yolo County Supervisor Don Saylor who committed to getting the results of the Summit out to the partners and reporting to the respective Board of Supervisors. He also committed to assembling similar information from prior events and identifying the most promising ideas within 90 days, continuing the ongoing partnership between the counties, and over the next six months exploring the potential for establishing an Ombudsman potentially shared across the two jurisdictions.

Throughout the Summit information on economic research and economic and business development projects and programs was presented by the leaders in those initiatives. This helped the Summit participants envision what opportunities for adding value in agriculture could look like. The following presentations were delivered:

- **Presentation of The Food Chain Cluster: Integrating the Food Cluster in Solano and Yolo Counties to Create Economic Opportunity**
 - Doug Henton, Collaborative Economics
- **Summary of the Solano and Yolo counties Agriculture Futures Reports**
 - Dan Sumner, University of California Agricultural Issues Center



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- **Update on the Dixon Ridge Agricultural Region and the Northeast Dixon Agricultural Supporting Limited Industrial Area**
 - Jim Louie, County of Solano Principal Planner
- **Lunch Keynote Speaker: Glenda Humiston, State Director for USDA Rural Development**
- **Presentation: Peter Fiat, First Northern Bank**
- **Case Study on the Seed Industry**
 - François Korn, Seed Central
 - Chris Zanobini, California Seed Association
- **Case Study on Aggregation Hubs**
 - Gail Feenstra, Agricultural Sustainability Institute
 - Danielle Boulé, UC Davis Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program

Interspersed in between the presentations, in two facilitated interactive sessions the participants identified and came to consensus on the blocks, barriers and underlying contradictions inherent in adding value to agriculture and substantive actions and strategies to overcome these barriers. The strategies have been aligned in three strategic thrusts or directions including **Promoting our Strengths, Developing Our Product** and **Building Public / Private Partnering**. Descriptions of the process and detailed results are found below.

Meeting Notes: Facilitated Discussions

Facilitated Discussion: Identifying Barriers and Contradictions to Growing Agriculture and the Food Cluster in Solano and Yolo Counties

The Underlying Contradictions workshop asks the question:

What is currently blocking the full realization of adding value to our agriculture?

The current realities facing our organizations, businesses and communities become manifest when placed under the light of our intention to increase value to our agriculture. Without this vision, our problems and anxieties are relegated to 'lists of things to do' or a list of victim complaints. As a group considers the range of its issues together, root causes can be uncovered and objectified for sober consideration and proposed actions.



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► UNDERLYING CONTRADICTIONS

Focus Question: *What is blocking us from moving towards our vision?*

- We are in 2 air quality management districts. Air quality impacts by growth in the Bay Area and how this affects value-added enterprises
- North Delta under extreme conflicts with government agencies and while we have plenty of water, it could be sent away to other entities/regions.
- Many regulations are made to constrain urban development but also constrain agriculture processing facilities.
- Ag tourism – ag producers may not want lots of urban people in their area.
- Nice place to grow crops and to raise families.
- Projects
 - Juicing operations
 - Wine production
- The paradigm of adding value to agriculture is stuck in the past
- FEMA regulations limit building in flood plains raising costs.
- Local resistance to invasion of tourists
- Two local governments should work together, but each wants local control
- Agriculture usually must change on the urban/ag interface areas to satisfy urban desires/concerns of farming activities
- Regulations can have a positive impact
- Rural residential development has a disproportionately larger impact to agriculture
- Globalization has increased movement of invasive species
- People don't understand the value of farming, but appreciate seeing it
- High school agriculture education is compromised; cannot find ag teachers. There is a great need to educate children of about agriculture and



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limited ability to deliver this education to children. Mary Kimball – at the local level ag education has been increasing, except in Davis.

- Urban and agriculture realities are diverging
- Food safety - standards are more rigorous here, but we import food from other countries from less regulated countries
- While we call ourselves ag counties, policy implementation doesn't reflect this
- USDA is oriented toward mid-western agriculture
- If farm people have to move equipment on roads, and utilize drain canals, but tourism and urban/state demands for access and high water quality
- Legislators are from urban areas
- Only a small fraction of locally grown food is consumed locally
- Food safety requirements are difficult for small farmers to meet and increase risks to processors.
- Lack of aggregation hubs for aggregation and processing due to capital constraints, lack of support from EDC,
- Need to have ombudsman to provide information to those interested in starting businesses
- Cost of land limits access to farming by aspiring farmers
- Urban people see ag land as open space, but don't understand that viable agriculture supports the open space
- We want young people to enter agriculture, but also want them to invest lots of \$ in their education. Agriculture will not pay the student loan debt
- Under-recognized sense of regional place
- People don't see farming as an industry that creates jobs, only as a temporary activity until land is developed
- The biological value/ecosystem services provided by farmland is not valued
- Fear of regulations inhibits landowners/farmers from investing in activities that provide ecological services
- Labor



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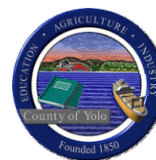
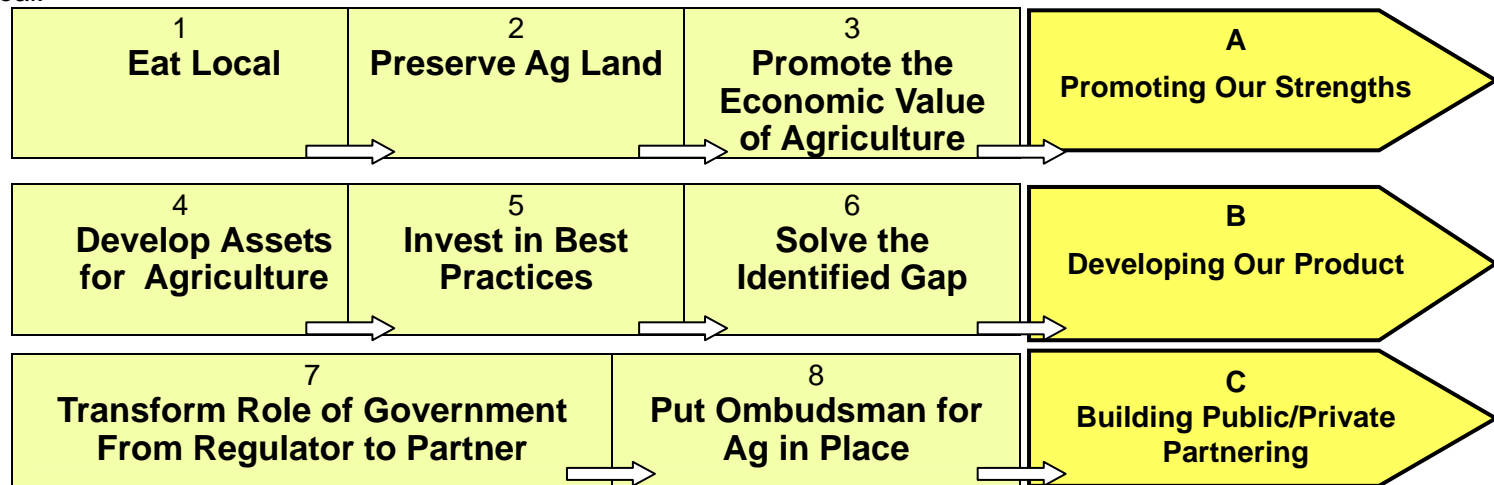
Facilitated Discussion: Building the Consensus for Action

► **STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS and ACTIONS | Definition and Summary**

The Strategic Directions workshop asks the question:

What innovative, substantial actions can we take to address the underlying contradictions and move us toward adding value to our agriculture?

In the Strategic Directions workshop, participants are asked to focus on creative, practical actions that will deal with the blocks and opportunities identified in the previous session as well as move the region toward its practical goal of adding value to our agriculture. By planning strategically, that is, in relation to our real situation and the underlying challenges and our goal to add value to agriculture, we have a chance to realize our goal.



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STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS | Strategies with recommended actions

A. Promoting Our Strengths		
<p>1) Eat Local</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve local food at every public event • Support specialty farms at urban fringe • Regional Brand and buy in 	<p>2) Preserve Ag Land</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect farm land • Preserve Ag land • Farm Conservancies (revise statutes to support) • Ag's needs zone overlay 	<p>3) Promote Economic Value of Agriculture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate the economic value of agriculture • Promote ag industry economic value • Apprenticeships link students to ag and farm production jobs • Follow-up activity: total ag value chain (production, distribution) • Engage non-ag sectors in discussion • Cooperative branding and promotion • Promote UCD to region • Utilize/exploit positive economic environment for exports • Find ways to create positive environment for processors • Cross-market across region • Tap into UCD talent • Ag tourism to change • Cities and counties view ag as economic hub • Expose mainstream youth with ag • Inform public about Ag potential • Occupy Ag – Speak as One • Commitment of our participation and missionary work • Crop signage that connects commuters with local • Engage UCD in project-based research



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B. Developing Our Product

<p>4) Develop Assets for Agriculture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to capital for farmers + • Capital!!! Business plans addressing risk and highlighting potential return • Align interest of Silicon Valley with regional ag. • Wine infrastructure for Delta • Address area dairy shed – develop infrastructure for creamery • Appropriate affordable farm-worker housing 	<p>5) Invest in Best Practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal regional PAC – education, marketing, ag lobbying • Copy successful models • Ongoing enterprise networking with UC crossover • Investigate regional distribution centers • Practical, scalable, focused • Identify best practices 	<p>6) Solve the Identified Gaps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the gap analysis for existing commodities • ID commodity need gaps and opportunities • Hold reconnaissance meeting, who is doing what, resources, ID gaps in value supply chain, ID element to pursue with greatest \$ output and jobs • Affordable distribution for small farmers • Sustainability – resources, economic, work with what we’ve got (s)
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C. Building Public / Private Partnering

<p>7) Transform Role of Government from Regulator to Partner</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze why business leaves Calif. Region • Transform role of local govt. from regulator to partner • Real world regulations for small business • Incentives for value added processing • Consolidate and streamline regulatory agencies • Determine actual problem to solve • Reinstitute guest worker program • Counties adopt regulatory “can do” • State/local create land policies that promote ag!! • 	<p>8) Put Ombudsman For Ag In Place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Ombudsman to facilitate value added enterprises • Create county agricultural economic development team • Ombudsman – education, information, collaboration • Remove barriers to regional cooperation, i.e. SACOG vs. ABAG • On-line Collaborative resources to enable regional ag production • Share with one another projects we are working on and current status • End result planning
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