Buyer Outreach and Networking

SW Washington Food Hub
USDA Local Food Promotion Program
Planning Grant Deliverable

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A. INTRODUCTION

Three primary approaches were used in 2020 and 2021 to gather data regarding potential food hub buyers, products of interest, evaluate pricing, and begin quantifying food hub sales potential. Outreach team members included representatives from WSU Extension, Thurston EDC, and staff at the SW WA Food Hub. The group endeavored to keep exploratory buyer outreach calls separate from buyer onboarding recruitment. In this way, WSU Extension and Thurston EDC were primarily responsible for buyer outreach to evaluate potential interest, price points, and product types, while SW WA Food Hub staff subsequently received summaries of these conversations for onboarding outreach. Nevertheless, this separation was in some instances artificial but did appear to help in securing candid and non-binding prospective buyer information.

Among the outreach methods, primary buyer outreach occurred through individual calls and interviews with 20 local grocery retail outlets, institutions, and restaurants, in a manner to accommodate COVID-19 restrictions. Secondly, the team implemented a rigorous consumer survey of a random sample of 1,690 adults in Thurston, Mason, Grays Harbor, and Pacific Counties to gather consumer data and interest regarding the food hub. Postcard invitations and two reminders were sent. In total 136 households responded. Finally, five local buyers participated in a group buyer phone call and discussion.

This outreach method differed significantly from what were envisioned to be buyer-seller networking meetings as proposed in the original Local Food Promotion (LFPP) planning grant. These were envisioned as highly interactive and social buyer-seller networking events that could raise awareness, create new relationships, and introduce a measure of fanfare to a potential food hub launch. Project partners have hosted these events in the past yet were prevented from using this strategy at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020. Nevertheless, the team was able to establish relationships with product buyers in SW Washington, and obtain baseline sales data from potential Food Hub accounts, which is presented below.

B. MARKET DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES

General Market Development Practices
Aside from the potential to supply specific products needs among restaurants, the Food Hub should employ several standard strategies for all existing and potential accounts.

Develop and circulate a weekly Fresh/Hot Sheets. Restaurants and co-ops in particular have established buyers. However, they regularly experience gaps in supply, and when they do, they revisit standard distributor product listings. The Food Hub should be a go-to back-up for these buyers.

Use product samples to recruit buyers. Some buyers may be unconvinced that local farms can provide the consistency and quality they require. Early accounts of Organic Valley refer to driving up and down the west coast, sleeping on couches, and visiting prospective stores with a cooler full of cheese. *Challenge hesitant buyer assumptions vigorously at the taste bud.* An example is providing cilantro and tomatillos to local Mexican restaurants to help chefs, owners and buyers understand the high-quality of locally grown product.

Identify and exploit specialty and niche products. Restaurants, in particular, have go-to distribution listings and farms to get unusual and unique products. Be a go-to source for interesting, niche products. Chefs can be whimsical and creative in their special menu offerings. Be front and center, and use social media (many chefs follow Instagram and other social media accounts) to feature the hubs unique specialties.

Identify products that can be distributed to multiple buyers. Work with existing members/ suppliers, or specifically onboard new members who supply some buyers but perhaps not others. An example is a specialty mushroom seller who sells to some restaurants but not others (in Olympia an example is Adam’s mushroom). Some of these specialty sellers’ minimum order may be too large for some small restaurants, but through the Hub that logistic can be managed.

Cultivate specialty, niche, and highly seasonal market opportunities. Food retailers may want specific items like bags of small multi-colored potato medleys, spring purple sprouting broccoli, overwintering cauliflower, or late season zucchini, among others.

Identify these niches with buyers and develop production plans with farmers specifically to supply these openings.

<u>Place-Based Market Development and Marketing Approaches</u>
The food fub should identify public events that will create local product demand surges. To accomplish this, the hub can plan ahead with specific businesses to identify when demand will surge and for what products. Restaurants in particular often know 6-months ahead about public events and can project quantities and build menus around specific products. Identify these and work with farmer members to supply these specific products. Some example local events for the SW WA Food Hub include:

- Lake Fair
- Spring Arts Walk, Fall Arts Walk
- The Olympia Marathon
- Olympia and Tumwater Brewfests
- Restaurant events organized by the Olympia Downtown Association that often feature special menus and highlight local restaurants.

Special menus featuring local farms and the Food Hub can be integrated into these events, particularly with advance planning.

<u>Apply an Appropriate Geographic "Fit" in Market Development Work</u>
The SW WA Food Hub should cultivate markets that match farm capacity and sales opportunities. Don't assume that just because other food hubs do it, that the SW WA Food Hub should do it. Ask the questions: 'what kind of markets do we have access to, what markets are well-matched (in volume and price) with the supply (farms) we have access to?'

- Food hubs interviewed for this project including LINC and Puget Sound Food Hub *identified the importance of geographical determinants of market opportunity*, regarding both the human geography of farms and their supply capacity, and the particular nature of accessible buyers.
- LINC Foods has not had the scale of produce suppliers to meet price points for institutional accounts in a way that they can achieve break-even objectives.
- PSFH has been able to supply whole-sale product due to access to large-scale produce farms, some of which sell into national markets.
- Producer education and training may alleviate or compensate for this by providing opportunity for farmers to shift production techniques, scale up if they are interested, and reduce costs to compete within the realm of wholesale pricing standards.

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C. PRICING

Early discussions around development of the SW WA Food Hub, back in 2017 and 2018, identified grower interest in exerting greater control over wholesale pricing. As such that has been a guiding objective for development cooperative aggregation and distribution resources in the region.

Based on the research this team completed connecting with buyers, ***several factors complicate an effort to exert an influence over wholesale pricing***, which include:

- Many prospective buyers have relationships with existing farmers and so price expectations are somewhat established
- Many of the “untapped buyers” procure through mainline distributors, and even those purchasing organic product regionally source from Organically Grown Company or Charlie’s Produce. These companies have well-established pricing structures and the expectation of a replacement local supply is more or less matched price. For example, one of the most often asked questions from buyer outreach was “Can you match Charlie’s prices?”
- Prospective buyers often cite “inconsistency” and “concern over quality” as initial concerns regarding purchasing from a new buyer, in this case the food hub. Demonstration of quality and consistency may be important to set the stage for “buyer partner” conversations that emphasize the need for some price fluctuations and increases
- Level of demand for local product can be low among buyers clientele, limiting the willingness to pay more while limiting their ability to pass these prices along.
- Finally, the outreach team noted that considerable education was needed for buyers to raise awareness about the value of local food systems, and why they may want to support local producers. Likely this ‘education’ will require a slow start with a few products, sustained exposure to local food system topics, getting to know farmers, and building trust, familiarity and shared aspirations regarding food and farming.

> “When someone tells you ‘I’m willing to pay 12% above case [price] but not 16%’, the best I can do is try to meet them where they are at. We want to get in the door, and use the relationship to find ways to exert more pricing control.”

With all these considerations in mind, food hub pricing can exert a few mechanisms to provide economic opportunity for local producers:

1. Utilize specialty items in smaller quantities that buyers are willing to pay more on because they don't use much
2. Continue to develop consumer-direct sales channels that don't compete with existing farm accounts because much greater price control is possible
3. Pursue high-value accounts in metropolitan centers comprised of buyers with more pricing latitude and, possibly (though not certainly), more awareness regarding food pricing
4. Compete in the short-term with mainline organic and conventional distributors on pricing, while at the same time building relationships with buyers to encourage them to move
5. Communicate clearly with buyers that you will work with growers to meet their prices, while being honest that there will be places where you want the buyers to work with the growers on the pricing they need

All of these pricing considerations also operate in the context of food hubs that are essentially free-market mechanisms in which farmers set their own prices. As such, ongoing direct conversations between food hub salespeople, farmers, and buyers needs to occur to ensure a degree of matching occurs to facilitate sufficient sales volume.

D. Insights from the Buyers

<u>Olympia Food Co-op East</u>

- Some items are harder to get in the late successions, like spinach and zucchini, bell peppers (not much available generally),
- Holiday items are good like dry beans
- Crops that "take a ton of work" are difficult to get like peas, cauliflower
- Event options are good like more holiday Brussels sprouts and winter carrots
- The co-op feels that they appear to be competing for product with more with higher value markets in Seattle and farmers' market; getting outcompeted
- Co-op price point is suppressed; trying to not outprice customers, but region's price points are escalating so farmers' selling elsewhere
- The co-op has regular supply of primary produce items, but gaps exist. Please provide weekly fresh sheets and the co-op will then have another back-up before resorting to a mainline distributor.

Three Magnets

- Make delivery more efficient, combine, like with Adam's mushrooms and other local product suppliers
- Send Fresh Sheets, product availability, he responds to email, Shows up Wednesday – Frank only guy ordering
- Cage-free eggs Stiebrs, he is the only that uses Stiebrs, can we get them and then get more restaurants to use Stiebrs?
- Coordinate with Frank to supply special events year-round. Otherwise, he goes to farmers market and buy them out. Events: weddings (cater), fall and spring Arts Walk, Lakefair, marathon, brewfests, Procession lighted parade, Downtown Association events (they feature restaurants, get on the menu: "cool specials!"), a "progressive" dinner (from restaurant to restaurant), and holidays
    - Plan with Frank! On many things he knows ahead what they need
- Supply presently through Calliope and Prairie Oak Farm; don't want to compete with them directly

Chelsea:

- They are a believer. Owner worked at Nora's in WA DC, where they built a Food Hub to supply the restaurant.
- Prefer to build a menu around what is available on a Hot Sheet
- Concerned about what the Hub mark-up is – has to be competitive

Hop Jacks (local chain, 21 locations, 3 states)

- Has a mission to support local communities but have not been given a road map to support local farmers through their purchasing patterns No customer demand
- A barrier is that local purchasing does not fit into business plan or concept [as presently written]
- Planning a pilot with their company could possibly create a replicable model
- Outreach team feedback noted that:

"Hops n Drops is an ideal corporate company to engage in Food Hub sales for SW WA. They have a mission to support local communities but have not been given a road map to support local farmers through their purchasing patterns. Contemplating how to build a "locally sourced" brand within their own local brand is something they could use assistance with. Strategically planning a pilot with their company could possibly create a replicable model to use with other restaurant chains. The Kids Feeding Kids® program was created to combat childhood hunger in every community they have a restaurant. With every kids meal sold, they donate 50 cents to help feed kids in need. There are definite integration opportunities with the food hub food security programs."

Chicory

- Is attempting to source 80% local
- COVID is keeping customer base small

Iron Rabbit and Cynara:

- Biggest challenge is consistency
- Hard to get the price point and to the door in a timely and consistent way
- Best practices is the farm relationship; [all for a] brand place on menu
- Key: need enough volume in the sale to anchor the transaction; having a program that carries through the year (i.e. a winter green program to carry through the winter, or consistent supply of enough products they use regularly generally to make it worthwhile)

Well 80

- The chef and owner are very interested and willing to look specifically at all the possible products they source.
- The restaurant has specific needs and a set menu, so products would need to fit their program.
- On items they don't use much of the price doesn't matter too much because it doesn't make a big budget impact. Items in this category are basil and cilantro.
- Items they use a lot of in their menu year-round are good opportunities for replacement because they would generate volume of sales, but they are also the items where paying more is the most difficult, because they purchase a lot of those. This is the case for Brussels sprouts, romaine hearts, burger lettuce, tomatoes, salad mix, ground beef.
- The key for this buyer to make a switch to a local product will likely require a deliberate approach (maybe with one or two key farmers), a clear crop variety and product that perhaps they have had a chance to sample, and a conscientious decision at the level of upper-management to give it a try. Some small-volume purchases can likely proceed in the meantime, but a large switch-over on a mainline item is not likely without detailed pre-planning and a very strong sense that the growers involved will deliver.

Anthony's

- 26 stores. Large PNW hospitality player. Thought leader in local food hospitality equations for decades.
- Commitment to local foods has been a part of the "Anthony's way" long before it was a trendy movement.
- Sources from around the state (farm product and value-added product) and Seafood from Alaska – at least 5 larger farms from places like Pasco, Bend, Skagit, Eltopia, Kent
- Key concerns are "cost and transportation"
- Mostly orders produce from Charlies, aside from select seasonal products.
- They would buy from the hub "but it would require relationship building"

Don Juan's

- Not interested in buying through the Hub, due to price and need for consistency and a fervent belief that the Mexican sun is essential in creating the highest quality of produce. They use tomatillos, tomatoes, peppers, and cilantro which could be provided through the hub.
- Currently sources produce through a Portland Co. who sources from Mexico.

Farelli's (local pizza chain, 10 stores)

- The cost of integration and the infrastructure required to aggregate local producers into their systems is cost prohibitive and does not fit their model
- Currently use mainline distributors – Cisco, Harbor Wholesale
- No customer demand

Nineveh

- Lisa is committed to utilizing local food sources when possible.
- She is also excited about expanding the operations value-added processing venture and using locally sourced ingredients in value added production.
- Lisa uses (local) Ladyberry farms as her main source of produce and is committed to that relationship.
- Lisa would like to order from the food hub and is also interested in being a vendor. It would take some relationship building, and would have to be for products she can not get from Ladyberry.

Spuds

- Very hard to communicate with individual farms

Providence St Pete's

- More if they start to get their eggs from us
- In July, they are switching to a new food service contract
- A perceived barrier they have is "Quality due to seasonality"

Capital Medical Center

- They are switching from a 100% Cisco contract currently
- Current Food Service Policy and GAPs needed

The Evergreen State College

- Hesitant about buying eggs from us – need to explore that more
- Very low student population

St Martins University

- Would purchase eggs via the Food Hub. Very supportive
- Low student population - waiting for things to open up

Thriftway

- Purchasing is very season dependent
- Interested in continuing to purchase from Kirsop and Kirsop is going to Hub

Farm Fresh

- Attempted to start a food hub so is a little salty

E. Insights from the Buyer Outreach Team

Selected Findings (reflections) from the Outreach Team

- The conversations where the buyer outreach team felt they were making ground, was in talking about assistance in building a locally sourced brand, and then combining it with a mission driven support effort for local producers.
- The hub may consider ideas about how to get a training/marketing program going that teaches restaurants how to "go local".
- It was clear to the team that there is a need for education regarding how to go local and why
- It might help the onboarding team to develop a more uniform approach to outreach, because it may be coming into conversations with buyers with widely differing approaches. An example is an approach that pitches set price points and set products, as compared to an approach with specific products but a conversation around price and value and then working to common pricing ground.
- One team member thought it would help for to revisit wholesale pricing guides. *Discussions with buyers and farmers/sellers* will benefit from price reference points. The goal has long been to exert more control of wholesale pricing, so will the hub be competitive with mainline organic distributor prices? How to aspire to more sustainable (higher) prices but also not be priced out of reach?

Findings by Buyer Type

Restaurant accounts

Restaurants present good potential partners that have often specific products with a close attention to price point. Restaurants already have many good relationships with buyers but they express interest in:

1. Greater consistency
2. Ease of purchasing
3. More regular access to more products

4. Access to specific products they can't already get (seasonal difficulty, not enough of certain things, or simply haven't found a source)
5. And supply for holidays and other prominent local occasions/events that bring a lot of people out to dine.

While there is opportunity, this is a tight market, and the hubs ability to provide consistent supply at a competitive price point and create robust planning tools to meet demand with supply will be the keys to success.

Institutional accounts

Hospitals and Higher Education Institutions

In past and current assessment of institutional buyers, 70% indicated an interest in purchasing product from local farms. Among these buyers, the most often cited obstacles to purchasing more local food are:

1. convenience,
2. access to farms, and
3. coordinating logistics of purchasing from farms

Institutions are enabled or hindered by the food service contracts they are committed to. Self-operated food services typically have more latitude for local purchasing. One early champion of the food hub purchasing concept transitioned out of self-operation model over the past year, and another transitioned into a contract more conducive to food hub purchasing.

Four institutional accounts (2 hospitals, 2 higher education institutions) have expressed interest in purchasing eggs through the food hub. The regional institutional accounts that have expressed the great interest and capacity in purchasing through the food hub include St. Martin's University, The Evergreen State College, Capital Medical Center.

K-12 schools

According to work completed by the WSDA Farm to School program, several of the most promising K-12 school contracts for the SW WA Food Hub are:

- Tumwater School District
- North Thurston School District
- Sound to Harbor Early Learning
- Bethel School District (Pierce Co)
- Federal Way School District

K-12 schools present a challenging situation for a food hub comprised of mostly smaller farmers and few if any farms capable of reaching wholesale price points (see above B: Apply Appropriate Geographic Fit in Market Development). High-potential Potential sales were quantified by the WSDA Farm-to-School program, and are noted in Table 1.

Vegetables schools are interested in purchasing locally

	% of schools
1. **Carrots**	54%
2. **Lettuce**	52%
3. **Broccoli**	51%
4. **Cucumber**	49%
5. **Tomatoes**	48%
6. **Salad mix**	45%
7. **Cauliflower**	41%
8. **Peppers**	41%
9. **Celery**	40%
10. **Onions**	40%
11. **Potatoes**	40%
12. **Beans (green)**	35%
13. **Corn**	34%
14. **Peas (fresh)**	34%
15. **Cabbage**	32%

Pricing examples from the Federal Way School District are provided below.
Local Product Needs at the Federal Way School District

Crop or product	Specs, volume & pack sizes	Per week	Per month	Current Avg Price	Approx. Max Price
Shrimp	Pre-cooked				
Apples	Gala, 136 ct	28-56 cs	112-224 cases	$20/cs	$22/cs
Pears	D'Anjou, 135 ct	40 cases	160 cases	$23/cs	$25/cs
Onions	Red, 25 lb cases	1 cases	4 cases	$10/cs	$12/cs
Cherry Tomatoes	Cherry/Grape 12 – 1pt boxes	4-6 cases	16-24 cases	$16/cs	$20/cs
Roma Tomatoes	25lb cases	4-6 cases	160 cases	$45/cs	$50/cs
Cucumbers	Garden, 36ct	6-8 cases	24-32 cases	$25/cs	$28/cs
Zucchini	Med, 22lb cases	1 case	4 cases	$22/cs	$25/cs
Butternut Squash	1" cubes, 12lb cases		2 cases (Oct, Dec, Mar only)	$28/cs	$30/cs

Minimally processed products are highly eligible for food hub sales as well if processing capacity can be secured. Product quantities and prices are estimated in Table 3.

Minimally Processed Product Needs, Quantities and Prices at Three Regional K-12 Institutions

						Price ranges ($/lb)		
Crop	Processing Type	**Northwest School** 1/week delivery to 1 school (Seattle)	**Tumwater School District** 1/week delivery to 10 schools	**Federal Way Public Schools** 1 Tuesday delivery to Central Kitchen	**Total est. demand (lbs)**	***Average price***	***Highest price***	**Value est. ($)**
Broccoli	Florets, 2 oz pre-packed	90	50	1125	65780	$0.90-$1.70 per lb	$2.25 per lb	$131,560
Cabbage	Shredded	30	100		6760	$0.80 - $1.10 per lb	$1.25 per lb	$6,760
Carrots (orange, rainbow)	Sticks	15	100		5980	$1.15 per lb		$6,877
Carrots (orange, rainbow)	Julienne	15						
Cauliflower	Florets, 2 oz pre-packed	90	100	1125	68380	$2.70 per lb	$3.50-$4.07 per lb	$256,425
Cherry tomatoes	whole		100		5200			
Cucumbers	Coins, 2 oz prepacked		50	1125	61100			
Celery	whole ribs or sticks		100		5200	$1.72 per lb		$8,944
Mirepoix	Carrot, Celery, Onion Blend	15			780			
Kale Slaw Mix	Kale, Red Cabbage, Carrots, Julienned and packed separate	15			780	$0.80 per lb	$1.75 per lb	$1,170
Cabbage Slaw Mix	Cabbage, Red Cabbage, Carrots, Julienned and packed separate	15			780	$0.80 per lb	$1.75 per lb	$1,170
Green Beans	Trimmed	70			3640	$2 per lb	$3 per lb	$9,100
Garlic	Peeled	5			260			
Romaine	Chopped	27.5			1430	$1.47 per lb	$1.90 per lb	$2,503
Total purchase potential (lbs)					**226070**		**Value ($)**	**$424,509**
Total purchase potential (tons)					**113**			

Retail grocery accounts

Retail grocers currently purchase from local farms, but in the case of some (Thriftway) the local farm would like to take ordering online to the Food Hub. Another retailer (Spuds) has difficult working with a multitude of local producers and would like to take their ordering online. The Olympia Food Co-ops have established relationships and purchasing mechanisms to source from local farms. However, three primary additional opportunities are available for the Olympia Food Co-op and any grocery retailer in the area, namely:

1. The co-op has regular supply of primary produce items, but gaps exist. Please provide weekly fresh sheets and the co-op will then have another back-up before resorting to a mainline distributor
2. Identify holidays and peak purchasing windows among the purchasing staff, and identify which items are typically in short supply.
3. Identify and exploit specific seasonal times when product is in short supply, and specialty or niche items that are typically always needed.

An example of these for the Olympia Food Co-op are multi-colored potato medley bags, late zucchini, late spinach, cherry tomatoes, peas, high-quality broccoli and cauliflower (on ice), purple sprouted broccoli, overwintering cauliflower (and any other overwintering crops), berries, Brussels sprouts (seasonal holiday), and winter carrots.

F. RESULTS FROM CONSUMER SURVEY

Consumer Survey Highlights

Below is a summary of a Consumer Survey implemented in a 5-County region of Grays Harbor, Lewis, Mason, Pacific, and Thurston Counties and led by Marilyn Sitaker. The survey consisted of a random sample of 1690 adults in Thurston, Lewis, Mason, Grays Harbor and Pacific County households, August 2020. Postcard invitations were to survey recipients, plus two reminders. This summary data below shows aggregate (unadjusted) results from all 5 counties. In total, 136 households responded, consisting of 84 in Thurston County (62%), with the rest distributed among the remaining four counties. Compared to the overall five-county population, Thurston County recipients tended to marked by more female respondents, and were more affluent, educated, older, and white.

Key Findings by Topic

Likelihood & motivations to buy from the Food Hub

- About 70% said they were either extremely (35%) or somewhat (35%) likely to buy fruit and vegetables from the Food Hub.
- Similarly more than 50% were interested in buying meat, eggs and dairy (details on slide 17).
- Top motivators for purchasing from the food hub were freshness and flavor (91%), support for regional farmers, high nutritional value and safety from pathogens/pesticides (84-80% each).
- However, a high proportion (89%) also said “Being able to pick up my order at a convenient location” was an important consideration.

Multi-Farm Boxes

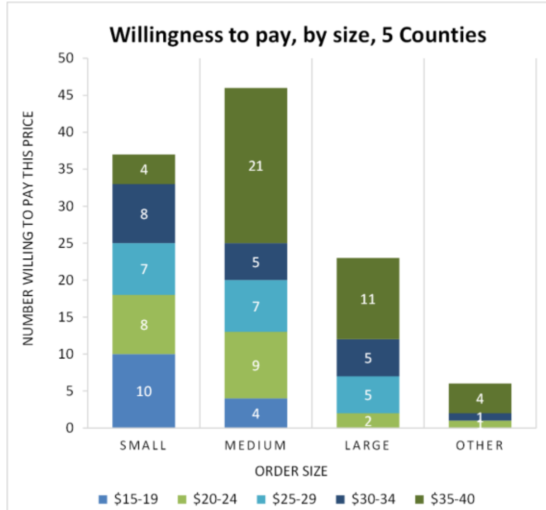
35.2% chose this amount | 41.6% chose this amount | 18.4 % chose this amount

- 63.2% said they would place a weekly order
- 16% said they order once a month
- 19.2% would order with some other frequency
- Only 1.6% said they would order more than once in a week

Willingness to Pay

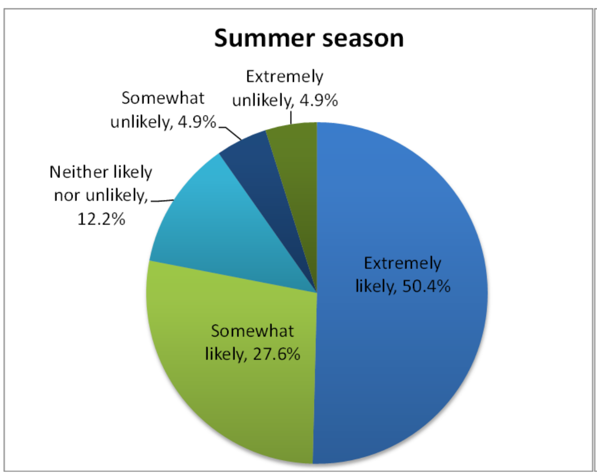
- Overall, 48% (40 out of 75 respondents) were willing to pay between $35 and $40 per order, regardless of size

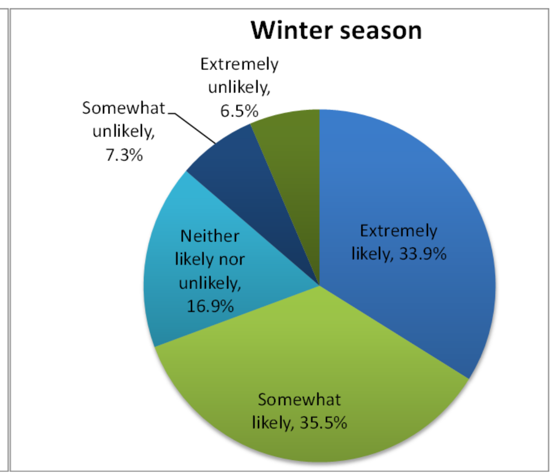
- Overall, the average preferred price was $29.70 per order, regardless of size



Likelihood of Seasonal Purchases

- 82.1% were either extremely or somewhat likely to buy from the Food Hub during the Summer season.
- 71.6% were either extremely or somewhat likely to buy from the Food Hub during the Winter season.





Key opinions about the Food Hub concept

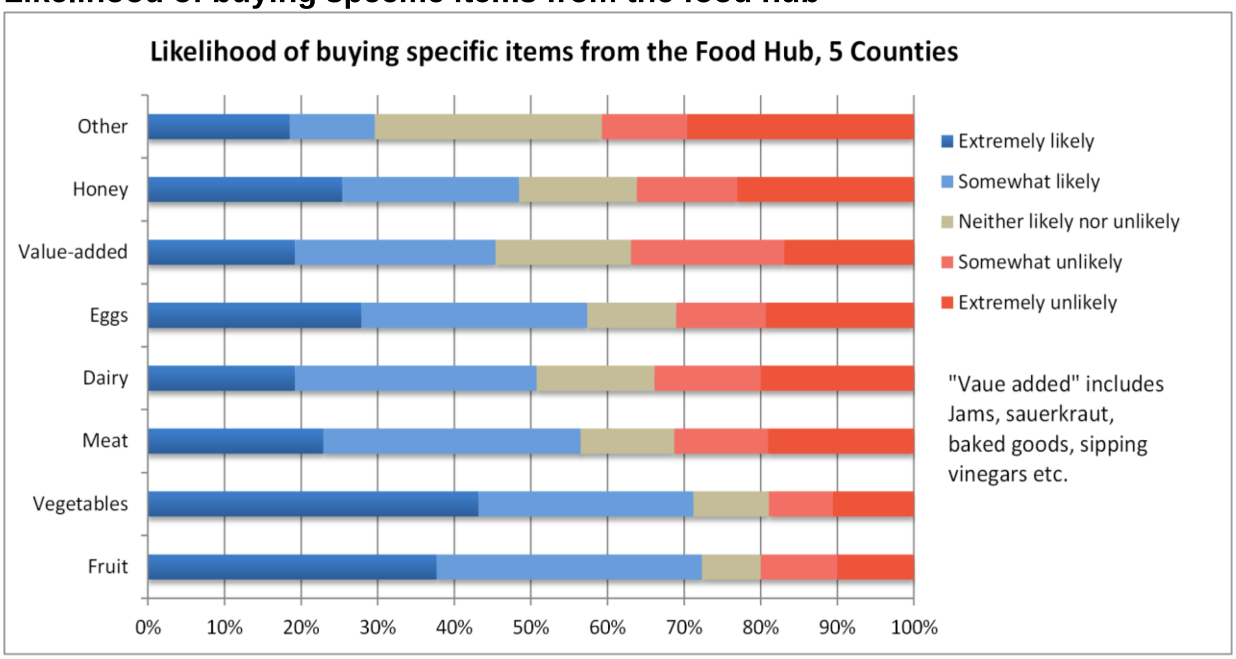
- Of 34 Thurston County respondents providing additional feedback, 6 expressed great interest; 3 were excited about it, 2 said they wanted to participate
- One saw advantages over other DTC options:
- “I’m reluctant to commit to a CSA because of volume and choices. Seems like a Food Hub would work for me…going to the farmers market is less fun in COVID times, so that increases the appeal of a Food Hub.”
- Another thought the Food Hub could address COVID risks and rural access:

- "Seems like a good idea to help reduce COVID transmission risks. Consider prioritizing food desert areas in the county before serving areas closer to stores and farmers markets."
- Two other respondents saw the Food Hub as a convenient way to shop due to online ordering and the potential for efficient shopping

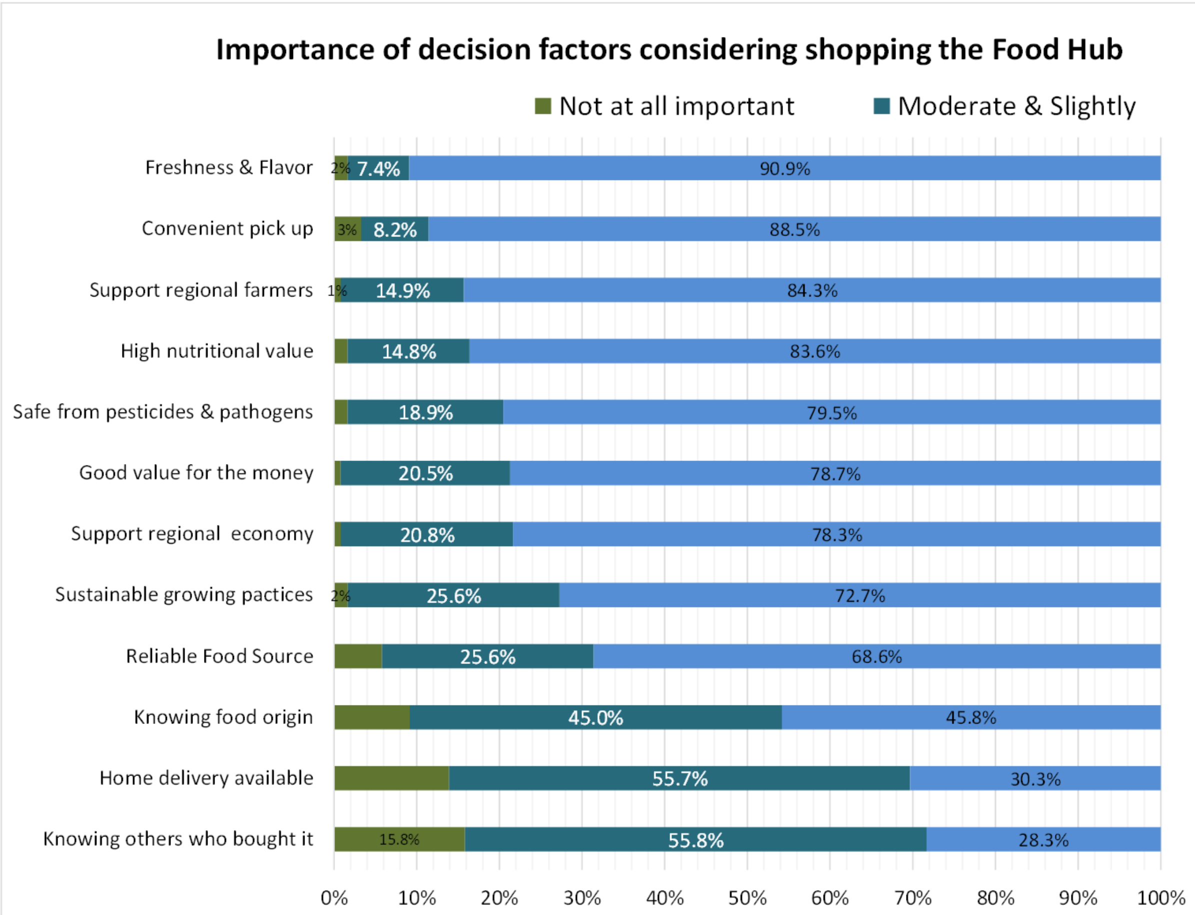
Conclusions

- 70% interested in buying fruit and vegetables from the Food Hub
- Additionally, 50% interested in buying meat, eggs and dairy
- 71.6% willing to buy from the Food Hub this winter
- About 70 people asked us to send more info on the Food Hub
- Preferred price was $29.70 –but over half willing to pay top dollar ($35-$40)
- Perceived as a solution to food deserts and COVID concerns
- Preferred pick up distance = 10.1 miles; folks want convenient pick up and maybe home delivery
- Loyalty to existing DTC venue and desire to self select produce may deter some
- Evidence of selection bias –future poll could focus on rural consumers and others

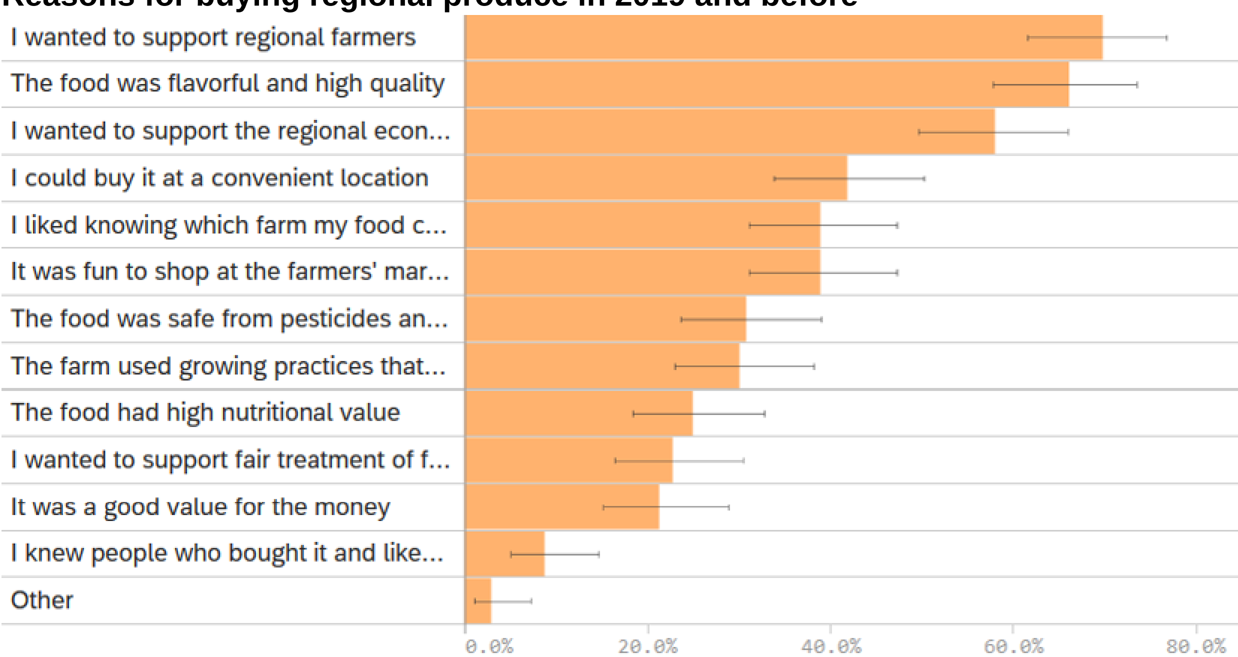
Likelihood of buying specific items from the food hub



Importance of decision factors considering shopping the food hub



Reasons for buying regional produce in 2019 and before



G. SPECIFIC BUYER DATA

<u>Characterization of Buyer Interests Regarding Products of Interest and Likely Transaction Totals by Timeframe</u>

Business	Range ($)	Amt ($)	Freq	Products	Notes
Spuds	100-300	225	1/wk	Carrots, berries, lettuce, some meats	Very hard to get to farms during COVID
Providence St Petes Chehalis	100	100	2/mo	Carrots, Lettuce, Potatoes, Broccoli, Berries, Eggs	More if they start to get their eggs from us
Providence St Petes Olympia	100	100	1/wk	Carrots, Lettuce, Potatoes, Broccoli, Eggs	More if they start to get their eggs from us. In July, they are switching to a new food service contract
Olympia Food Co-op	0-1000	500	1/wk	Colored mix potato medley, late zucchini, late spinach, cherry tomatoes, peas, broccoli, purple-sprouted broccoli, overwinter cauliflower, cauliflower, raspberries, strawberries, winter carrots	The co-op has regular supply of primary produce items, but gaps exist. Please provide weekly fresh sheets and the co-op will then have another back-up before resorting to a mainline distributor.
Capital Medical Center	1000	1000	1/wk	Eggs, Carrots, Lettuce, Potatoes, and Berries	They are switching from a 100% Sysco contract currently
The Evergreen State College	100-300	225	2/mo	Fresh Produce, maybe eggs, some meats on special days - can use more once catering is back	Hesitant about buying eggs from us - I need to explore that more
Saint Martin's	100-500	375	1/wk	Fruit, Berries, Some produce, Mushrooms, Eggs	Would purchase eggs via the Food Hub. Very supportive
Chicory	100	100	1/wk	Produce, local meats, mushrooms	Is attempting to source 80% local
Thiftway	300-500	425	1/wk	Produce, Mushrooms, Berries	Purchasing is very season dependant
Farm Fresh Market	?		?	Produce, Mushrooms, local meats	Attempted to start a food hub so is a little salty
Three Magnets	100-400	200	1/wk	Romaine hearts, Kennebec potatoes, Cilantro, sweet potatoes (Piece by Piece?), pickling veg (raddish,cucs, cauliflower, peppers, etc.), onions, kale, shredded cabbage (co-pack with Oly Kraut?)	Supply presntly through Calliope and Prairie Oak Farm; don't want to compete with them directly. Provide Fresh Sheets and can patch in when there are gaps.

Anthony's	400-1000	600	1/wk	Mixed greens, blueberries, strawberries, raspberries, ice cream, squash, tomatoes, romaine, iceberg, cheese, beer, wine.	
Iron Rabbit	still getting this		1/wk	Small yellow potatoes (50#/wk), overwintering greens (salad mix, arugula), honey, charcuterie, cheeses, hazelnuts, spring asparagus. Options: milk, cream, yogurt, mint, fresh herbs, lamb, rabbit, emu, bison, Black Sheep Creamery.	Consistency, consistency, consistency. "Hard to get the price point and to the door in a timely and consistent way. Worked well when Olympia Food Co-op sent a weekly price list with products from local farms."
Ninevah Food Truck/Catering	150-750	300	1/wk	Greens, beets, "tons of cauliflower", carrots, would love to get in on local meat	Lisa uses (local) Ladyberry farms as her main source of produce and is committed to that relationship. Lisa would like to order from the food hub and is also interested in being a vendor. It would take some relationship building, and would have to be for products she can not get from Ladyberry.
Hop Jacks	0	0	0	None identified. A question: for these places it would seem the approach is reading the menu, identifying items, confirming supply at a compelling price point, and going with a specific sales pitch in mind.This is diner food with a nod to the southwest, they appear to use a lot of sour cream (Tunawerth could make?), lettuce, tomatoes, cilantro, red onion, and cucumber.	See text box above on Hop Jacks as a potential ideal corporate company partner.
Farrelli's	0	0	0	Currently could not operationalize local buying. All products bought through Sysco, US foods, Harbor Wholesale. "Beer"	The cost of integration and the infrastructure required to aggregate local producers into their systems is cost prohibitive and does not fit their model. They are interested, but it would require a significant journey to develop a consistent contract for the Food Hub.

Chelsea Oyster Bar	300-1000	800	1/wk	Meat (inconstent locally; whole or halves preferred or large primal chunks, i.e. half pig 1x/2-3 mo); ground beef and steaks weekly; bread (inconsistent) $60 2x/wk; dairy (butter and milk	Weekly costing: $50 (butter) + $50 (butter) + $40 (edible flowers) + $100 (foraged fiddleheads, nettles, butter cress, flowers) + $120 (bread) + $60-$120 (beef/steaks) + $50 (Lost Peacock cheese) + $160 (honey) + $300 (produce current buyers) + $200 (Pacific Oysers, 20 dzn) + $200-$300 (mussels, Kamilche, $2-$/lb@ 10-20lbs). Chef Joe is "a believer", worked at Nora's in DC built local food hub for restaurant supply. Prefer a Hot Sheet; concerned about mark-up needs to be comeptititive.
Well 80	200-800	550	1/wk	Brussels sprouts, ground beef (a reach, they have specific needs), slicer tomatoes, lettuce (romaine/green leaf cross for burgers, salad mix, romaine hearts, basil, cilantro	Very interested, both owner and chef are excited. They do have specific needs, and the pricing is a thing. However, some items the wholesale organic prices are close to what they already pay. And some smaller volume items they have even more latitude because the small volume doesn't make a big budget impact (ie basil and cilantro). A big mainline item would be winter fall-winter Brussels. they do a lot, and it's seasonal so even though the volume is high perhaps they can swing it for a few months.
Don Juan's	0	0	0	Tomatillos, cilantro, tomatoes, peppers	Not interested in buying through the Hub, due to price and need for consistency and a fervent belief that the Mexican sun is essential in creating the highest quality of produce.