Bush Foundation Pre-Conference Call

1/26/15  
April Bogard  
Nicole Neeser  
Jan Joannides  
Jane Jewett  
Helene Murray

Likely questions about the project:

* Give a general overview of the project
  + Give the bigger picture of food systems; why improving the interaction of local food businesses, farms and regulators is important.
  + The agencies themselves struggle with which agency should be the licensing authority for various scenarios.
  + Would be useful to have resources that can be applied to analysis of gaps and identification of systems, etc. that could improve agency function. This is important, but not part of agency staff’s day-to-day jobs, so it doesn’t get done.
  + We need a way to identify needs on a bigger scale than one business or farm at a time, with larger impact on the system.
  + We (agency staff) live in this system and deal with it every day, so to us it makes sense. We have to hear from others about when it doesn’t make sense, and \*why\* it doesn’t make sense.
  + Examples?
    - Handwashing sinks at farmers’ markets – MDH suggested hanging sink on outside of wall – fm mkt people explained that there is no wall. Eventual solution: gravity-fed, free-standing handwashing stations with flip spouts on the water reservoirs.
    - FEAST show: great deal of time spent on phone conf. calls with MDH regulators and in LFAC meeting to pin down license types needed for different vendor scenarios. It was resolved for FEAST show, but cast a spotlight on the difficulty for regulators and vendors in figuring out the nuances of licensing businesses that don’t all fit into a standard model.
* Measurable outcomes?
  + Have general outcomes listed; put some specifics under these broad headings.
* Why is this project innovative? -- Jan, Nikki can answer
  + Local food people in WI are amazed and jealous that we have a process to discuss issues face-to-face with regulators.
  + The idea of getting regulators and non-regulators together to discuss issues around regulation of local food doesn’t seem like it should be that innovative, but really, it is – it seems to be fairly unique among states.
  + Include quotes from Colleen Paulus:
    - The regulatory oversight scenario in different parts of the state ranges from a minimum of four agencies within a county (MDA, MDH, FDA, USDA) to 11 agencies in one county (one county delegated authority, seven city delegated authorities, MDA, FDA, USDA.)  These divisions of jurisdiction can change even across the street within a single community.
* How is the problem you have identified typically handled in your field?
  + Most licensing questions are handled on a case-by-case basis between one inspector and one farmer.
  + It would be useful to have a more formal and collaborative structure for looking at cases; having more eyes on the case; better potential for resolving difficult questions and having those resolutions known throughout departments.
* What are the meetings like? --- Nikki can handle this question
  + April: What are the impressions of a newcomer to the meetings?
* Budget question: why research assistant(s) at 0.6 FTE? – Helene can answer
  + The thinking was that this would give us flexibility to hire the right people or the right person for the job: if there’s one person we really want, who could work in both agencies, we could hire that one person and have them split their time between MDA and MDH.
* Wrap-up speech: Helene can do this.
  + Bush funding would give us a chance to take this work a notch higher