



To: Cass Clay Food Commission
From: Cass Clay Food Partners
Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Council of Governments (Metro COG)
Date: November 12, 2019
RE: Cass Clay Food Commission Agenda and Correspondence

27th Meeting of the Cass Clay Food Commission

November 13, 2019 10:30 am – 12:00 pm
Location: Fargo City Commission Chambers

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| 10:30 am | 1. Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Note on the Passing of Commissioner Vern Bennettb. Approve Order & Contents of the Overall Agendac. Review & Action on Minutes from May 8 & September 11, 2019
(Attachment 1a & 1b) |
| 10:35 am | 2. Commission Check-In – Chair Thorstad |
| 10:40 am | 3. Single Use Packaging Materials Snapshot –Kim Lipetzky (Attachment 2) |
| 10:45 am | 4. Metro Food Plan – Input on Objectives and Action Steps – Kim Lipetzky & Abby Gold |
| 11:05 am | 5. Jurisdiction Spotlight: City of Horace – Chelsey Johnson |
| 11:15 am | 6. Cass Clay Hunger Coalition Update – Kim Lipetzky (Attachment 3) |
| 11:25 am | 7. Northern Plains Sustainable Agriculture Society & the New Roots Farm Incubator – Verna Kragens, Executive Director |
| 11:40 am | 8. Public Comment Opportunity – Chair Thorstad |
| 11:50 am | 9. Commission & Steering Committee Roundtable – Chair Thorstad |
| 11:55 am | 10. Commission Action Steps <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Next First Fridays – December 6, 2019b. Next Commission Meeting – January 8, 2020 |
| 12:00 pm | 11. Adjournment |

Cass Clay Food Commission meetings are taped and rebroadcast on cable channel TV Fargo 56 each Friday at 11:00 am. People with disabilities who plan to attend this meeting and need special accommodations should contact Savanna Leach at Metro COG at 701.532.5100. Please contact us at least 48 hours before the meeting to give our staff adequate time to make arrangements. Meeting minutes are available on the Cass Clay Food Partners website at www.cassclayfoodpartners.org and Metro COG's website at www.fmmetrocog.org.

A PLANNING ORGANIZATION SERVING

FARGO, WEST FARGO, HORACE, CASS COUNTY, NORTH DAKOTA AND MOORHEAD, DILWORTH, CLAY COUNTY, MINNESOTA

Attachment 1a

**25th Meeting of the
Cass Clay Food Commission
May 8th, 2019
Fargo Commission Chambers**

Members Present:

Mike Thorstad, West Fargo City Commission, Chair
Jenny Mongeau, Clay County Commission
Jim Aasness, Dilworth City Council
Sara Watson Curry, Moorhead City Council
Chelsey Johnson, Horace City Council
Vern Bennett, Cass County Commission
Mindy Grant, At-Large Member
Kayla Pridmore, At-Large Member
Bukola Bakare, At-Large Member
Nancy Carriveau, At-Large Member
Jeremiah Utecht, At-Large Member

Members Absent:

John Strand, Fargo City Commission

Others Present:

Kim Lipetzky, Fargo Cass Public Health
Noelle Harden, U of M Extension
Abby Gold, NDSU Department of Public Health
Margie Bailly, Cass Clay Food Partners
Paula Selzler, Sodexo
Bob Bertsch, Graduate Student NDSU Extension
Gary Goreham, NDSU Department of Anthropology and Sociology
Luke Champa, Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Council of Governments
Hunter Tran, Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Council of Governments

Chair Thorstad called the meeting to order at 10:30 AM.

1a. Approve Order and Contents of the Overall Agenda

Chair Thorstad noted that the agenda had been revised. He noted that item 5 would be grouped with item 7, and that Ms. Harden and Lipetzky would discuss the Metro Food Plan in Mr. Altenburg's absence.

A motion to approve the order and contents of the overall agenda was made by Ms. Watson Curry and seconded by Ms. Carriveau. The motion was voted on and unanimously approved.

1b. Review and Action on Minutes from March 13, 2019

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Ms. Carriveau and seconded by Mr. Aasness. The motion was voted on and unanimously approved.

2. Commission Check-In

Chair Thorstad stated that Commission members and the steering committee had an opportunity to provide updates on news or events happening in the community.

Ms. Johnson indicated that she is working with a resident in Horace to get a farmer's market started and will be trying it out a few times this summer, with the goal of having a more permanent location in the summer of 2020.

Ms. Carriveau stated that letter carriers in Fargo, West Fargo, Moorhead, and Dilworth would be picking up canned food items from homes on Saturday, May 11. She noted that the food would be going to the Great Plains Food Bank, Dorothy Day, and the Emergency Food Pantry. She stated that additional volunteers are welcome to help collect the food.

Ms. Carriveau added that with the end of school coming up, the food bank would be helping with the childhood hunger programs this summer. She explained that as kids will not be getting food provided at school through school breakfast and or lunch, the food bank and other partners would be holding a youth summer meals program. She said they will be set up at one location in Village West and one in West Fargo.

Mindy Grant arrived at 10:35 AM.

3. Single Use Packaging Materials Issue Brief and Snapshot

Ms. Oxendahl gave a presentation regarding single use materials. She informed the commission that many communities are taking efforts to reduce plastic waste by eliminating the harmful single use items.

Ms. Oxendahl went on to talk about a couple things happening in the region. First, she said there is the FM Plastic Bag Task Force, who is working in the metro to educate the public on what they can do with plastic bags. Prairie Roots Food Coop has eliminated plastic bags for customers to carry groceries out of the store. They have also started a take-a-jar leave-a-jar program which cleans and sanitizes different containers for more sustainable use. She said Natural Grocers has also eliminated plastic bags. The Red River Market has also become a landfill free event. She said that the market sees 7,000 to 10,000 people a day, and would like to see a commercial composting option in the region, as they need more room to compost any waste produced by the market or its vendors. She said that Concordia and MSUM have a green-to-go program for students to take any leftovers from meals in a reusable container that they can bring back to the cafeteria to be cleaned. She added that there are several businesses and restaurants in our community that are working to reduce plastic waste. She informed the commission of a 2019 ND bill (HB1200) which puts a ban on the ban of single use plastics, which she believes may be a step in the wrong direction.

Ms. Oxendahl concluded with actions that our community should consider such as a high-heat commercial composting site, providing resources to small businesses on how to reduce their use of single use plastic materials, and supporting those businesses that have reduced their use of single use materials. She then pointed commissioners to the final page of her presentation which offers examples of what people can do to reduce single use materials in their day-to-day lives.

Ms. Mongeau suggested that awareness is key and even simple signage may go a long way in helping people recycle and reduce waste.

Mr. Utecht asked if there had been any consideration in helping new businesses with reducing single use materials, and if there were any resources out there to help new businesses. Ms. Oxendahl said there were not many resources but it could be a great partnership for local government to assist the business community.

Ms. Watson Curry reiterated that plastic bags are not quite as visible, but stressed that the plastic bags cannot be recycled in commingled recycling bins. She then asked if there was any discussion with local recycling businesses. Ms. Oxendahl said no but she will be updating the snapshot. Ms. Watson Curry suggested we reach out to recycling businesses in the region to make sure the recycling stream is working from household to sorting bin to the recycling business as a useable product.

Ms. Gold said it is important to include a zero waste mindset into business models and especially through resources provided to new businesses. She said it could help save money throughout the community.

Mr. Bennett asked if anyone had an opinion about incinerating some waste products. Ms. Oxendahl said there is an air quality issue related to incinerating waste but the option could always be explored further by local governments. Ms. Gold added that composting is the most environmentally friendly and cost effective way to take things out of the landfill.

Mr. Thorstad asked if it would be worthwhile to engage the chamber of commerce on this topic. Ms. Oxendahl said yes it would be very worthwhile to spread this information throughout the community. Ms. Watson Curry said that there is a group from the chamber of commerce that is interested in being more environmentally friendly when handling waste in our communities.

4. Benefits for Businesses in Reducing Single Use Materials

Paula Selzler introduced herself and her employer Sodexo, which is an international company that provides facilities management and food service to MSUM, Essentia Health, and Noridian. Ms. Selzler currently works at Essentia Health Hospital in Fargo. The Hospital opened in 2000 and has grown, with a café and kitchen remodel in 2015. Ms. Selzler said currently they serve 250-400 trays of food in room service, and 750-1,000 meals in retail everyday.

Ms. Selzler said that room service is 75% reusable products however the café is 95% single use products. She shared some images and statistics of how much single use plastic pollutes the earth. She added that Sodexo has a commitment for 2025 or sooner to train employees to reduce carbon emissions and work on food waste targets as well. In the short-term she said they will eliminate single use plastic take out bags and plastic stirrers and reduce plastic straw use by adopting a 'by request' policy. Long-term goals will take place by 2025.

Ms. Selzler shared an example of success at Essentia Health. She said they were looking for ways to reduce departmental costs and identified an opportunity in spending of disposable materials. She said staff would often use disposable 32oz styrofoam cups to fill with water however, they would often double them up for better insulation and add a plastic lid and straw. The costs were not recouped as this was for employees, and it resulted in more plastic waste. Ms. Selzler said that she offered Essentia Health mugs that could be purchased by employees and café customers. The stainless steel mugs were on sale for \$20 however, Ms. Selzler did not care about the cost of the mugs as much as the potential reduction in waste. She offered incentives for people to purchase them such as a free fill of coffee or soda and discounts when using any reusable mug. Ms. Selzler also said they began charging \$0.25 for each styrofoam cup without a beverage purchase. She said that they sold 125 of the 150 mugs they purchased.

Ms. Selzler then shared some results from the Essentia Health mug program. She said they reduced their spending on the styrofoam cups by \$1,000 a month. Since charging for the styrofoam cups without a beverage purchase, they earn \$75 a month. She went on to say that

in three months time, it reduced the usage of disposable cups by 23,000, which is a substantial number.

Ms. Selzler said their future goals include reducing straw use all around, and reducing single use plastic waste in the café. She shared that if they use a stainless steel fork five times, they break even on the cost of five disposable forks.

Ms. Selzler shared some other things that the community could look at including proper disposal of compostable single use items, community education, and strategies for reducing single use items such as charging for shopping bags. She shared an example of Davies High School in Fargo, explaining that they implemented reusable forks in the cafeteria; however, students were throwing them in the trash in hopes that the school would switch to disposables because reusable forks are seen as less clean. She shared this example because it is important to educate children and adults alike about this information.

Mr. Thorstad said that what Ms. Selzler shared is very important. He agreed with her that education is very important at every level, including what can and cannot be recycled.

Ms. Johnson said she was struck by the quantity of cups reduced in three months and what a difference that was.

6. Social Network Analysis

Bob Bertsch explained what the social network analysis for the Cass Clay Food Commission is about, and how it will help guide food policy in the region. The analysis will also map the relationships between decision makers in Cass and Clay counties. Mr. Bertsch said that this will help shape food policy in the region by showing what relationships are strongest and who has the most interactions on the commission. He said the analysis will also help show where stronger connections can be made to improve decision making across the region. He added that it will be interesting to see how local government decision makers are connected with food policy.

Mr. Bertsch asked the Commission to please fill out the survey, whether online or with the envelope provided.

Ms. Bakare asked who would be taking the survey. Mr. Bertsch responded that the Cass Clay Food Commission, City Commissions, County Commissions, Cass Clay Food Commission Steering Committee, and some city staff such as administrators, community developers, and planners. She asked if there would be an interest in also seeing how the community engages with the policy makers. Mr. Bertsch said that yes, he would be really interested in that however it is a serious undertaking to get the response rate required to show informative results.

Ms. Harden said that names can be added to the survey too if they are not on the original list of 68.

Mr. Thorstad asked if they were required to select a single category that describes the relationship to other decision makers, or if multiple categories may apply. Mr. Bertsch said select the one category that best describes the relationship as it relates to food policy.

Ms. Watson Curry asked if there was an encouraged deadline for survey completion. Mr. Bertsch said that by the end of June they would like to have all the responses and dive into analysis mode.

Ms. Mongeau left at 11:23 AM.

7. Commission Update on Previous & Future Activities

Ms. Harden gave a brief update on the Metro Food Systems Plan. She said that she, Ms. Lipetzky, and Metro COG would be coming to decision making bodies sometime in the summer to provide an update on the plan. Ms. Harden added that the Cass Clay Food Partners has developed several blueprints, which provide helpful information regarding key food related topics that impact the metropolitan area.

Ms. Lipetzky gave a recap about food systems topics that have been covered by the Cass Clay Food Partners. She added that the documents used to be called blueprints, however lately have been called issue briefs and community snapshots. She explained that the City of Fargo used the Backyard Chicken Keeping blueprint to help develop the city's ordinance on chicken keeping. She reminded the commission that these documents are at their disposal for any food system related issues that may come up in their communities.

Mr. Thorstad said it might be helpful to give municipalities printed copies of the food system blue prints and make it easier to get in their hands.

Ms. Harden asked each commissioner to share any food policy issues that are on their radar. Ms. Watson Curry highlighted that the Metro Food Plan is referenced in the City of Moorhead's Strategic planning document. Ms. Watson Curry then said some issues have come up regarding rain gardens, pollinator habitat, composting, community gardens, backyard bee keeping, and backyard chicken keeping.

8. Public Comment Opportunity

Chair Thorstad informed the Commission that time would be allotted for public comments.

Barb Villella, Prairie Roots Community Fund, gave an update about what the Prairie Roots Community Fund is working on including the spring garden, double SNAP bucks program, and classes at Madison School. She added that she was also working on a double SNAP bucks program at the West Acres Farmers Market as well.

Ms. Villella also noted one issue she had come across in the metro is the limit of the amount of grocery bags that can be carried onto the bus. She said currently the limit is four, and that many people do not know there is a limit. Ms. Bakare asked why the limit would be four. Ms. Villella said that it is most likely a local level decision. Ms. Harden said that she would look into it more closely.

Ms. Harden said that there would be a University of Minnesota Extension workshop on backyard chicken keeping in Moorhead on Saturday, May 11. The reason the workshop is happening is because of demand of the local community. She said the workshop would be at the Courtyard Marriott from 10:00 AM to 12:30 PM, and would include a discussion about the current policies regarding chickens.

9. Commission and Steering Committee Roundtable

Chair Thorstad asked for the Commission and the steering committee to share any additional updates.

No additional comments were made.

10. Commission Action Steps

Chair Thorstad stated that the next Commission meeting would be held on September 11. He also mentioned that the next First Fridays event would be held on May 10 at 8:00 AM located at Theatre B in Moorhead.

Mr. Thorstad informed the commission that the Red River Market is moving to the Forum parking lot for a couple years due to construction downtown.

Chair Thorstad adjourned the meeting at 11:45 AM.

Attachment 1b

**26th Meeting of the
Cass Clay Food Commission
September 11th, 2019
Fargo Commission Chambers**

Members Present:

Mike Thorstad, West Fargo City Commission, Chair
Jim Aasness, Dilworth City Council
Chelsey Johnson, Horace City Council
Mindy Grant, At-Large Member
Nancy Carriveau, At-Large Member
Jeremiah Utecht, At-Large Member

Members Absent:

Jenny Mongeau, Clay County Commission
John Strand, Fargo City Commission
Sara Watson Curry, Moorhead City Council
Vern Bennett, Cass County Commission
Kayla Pridmore, At-Large Member
Bukola Bakare, At-Large Member

Others Present:

Kim Lipetzky, Fargo Cass Public Health
Rory Beil, Clay County Public Health
Kayla Carlson, NDSU Extension
Noelle Harden, U of M Extension
Abby Gold, NDSU Department of Public Health
Deb Haugen, Cass Clay Food Partners
Margie Bailly, Cass Clay Food Partners
Don Kinzler, Cass County Extension, Agriculture & Natural Resources
Adam Altenburg, Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Council of Governments

A quorum was not present at the meeting. Non-actionable items were presented as information to the Commission and no action was taken on any items.

Chair Thorstad noted two new steering committee members: Kayla Carlson, NDSU Extension; and Emma Notermann, Clay County Planning

1a. Approve Order and Contents of the Overall Agenda

A motion to approve the order and contents of the overall agenda was made by Mr. Aasness and seconded by Ms. Carriveau. The motion was voted on and unanimously approved.

1b. Review and Action on Minutes from May 8, 2019

No action was taken.

2. Commission Check-In

Chair Thorstad stated that Commission members and the steering committee had an opportunity to provide updates on news or events happening in the community.

Ms. Johnson stated that the Horace would hold its first farmers market on October 11 from 3:30 to 7:00 PM at the Horace Fire Department. She indicated that vendors looking to sell consumable items were welcome.

Mr. Utecht informed the Commission that the Aronia Berry Harvest Festival would be held on September 15 at the Nelson Aronia Farm near Amenia, ND.

Ms. Grant stated that, as part of Welcoming Week, the Plains Art Museum would be hosting the first International Pop-Up Market on September 12 from 6:00 to 8:00 PM. She indicated that the market would have fresh produce grown locally by New American farmers as well as crafts by local artisans.

Ms. Carriveau stated that trucks supplying fresh vegetables, bakery items, and boxed goods would be at Axis Clinicals in Dilworth September 11 from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM as part of the Great Plains Food Bank Pop-Up Perishable Food Program. She indicated that anyone in need of food assistance was welcome to attend and receive food at no cost.

Mr. Aasness indicated that the Dilworth Farmers Market was moved from Whistle Stop Park to the Dilworth Community Center for the remainder of the season.

3. Single Use Packaging Materials Issue Brief and Snapshot

Ms. Harden provided an update regarding three changes to the single use packaging materials snapshot. She informed the commission that an additional educational piece on MinnKota EnviroServices had been added which included information on their recycling efforts. She also stated that two additional bullet points had been added under 'Community Actions' including: providing consumers with additional recycling education to lessen recycling contamination; and assist local businesses to start as waste-free, low waste business, or work with existing businesses to move toward that goal.

Mr. Utecht stated that he owns a zero-waste craft soda business. He indicated that he would be happy to provide any additional information on how his business was able to become waste-free.

No action was taken.

4. Metro Food Plan Update

Mr. Altenburg provided the Commission an update on the Metro Food Plan. He stated that the purpose of the plan is to help local governments and the public understand why food systems planning is important in the community, identify food production and food security challenges and opportunities in the area, and provide strategic recommendations for local governments to guide the development of the local and regional food system.

Mr. Altenburg stated that the previous Metropolitan Food Systems Plan was first completed in October 2013 and that it established the first framework and policy considerations for understanding and strengthening the local food system. He iterated that this plan was adopted by the City of Fargo, Fargo Cass Public Health, and Clay County Public Health.

Mr. Altenburg informed the Commission that the Metro Food Plan would be centered on the five values of the Cass Clay Food Partners, including: a food system that is inclusive, integrated, and equitable, a food system that supports and enhances quality of life for all residents; a food

system that respects all cultures, a food system that is economically and ecologically resilient, and a food system that fosters entrepreneurship and sustainable innovation. He indicated that case studies supporting these core values will be highlighted in the plan.

Mr. Altenburg provided brief information on the indicators and trends that would be analyzed as part of the Metro Food Plan. He also highlighted public input efforts that were conducted as part of the plan as well as current goals, objectives, and next steps.

5. Strengthening Ties between the Cass Clay Food Commission and Action Network

Ms. Gold a brief overview of the relationship between two components of the Cass Clay Food Partners: the Cass Clay Food Commission and the Action Network, also known as First Fridays. She concluded with a call to action for Commissioners to attend First Fridays at Theatre B to hear about events happening in the community, or volunteering to deliver announcements about upcoming Commission meetings.

6. Approaches to Pollinator Conservation

Don Kinzler, Cass County Extension, Agriculture and Natural Resources, provided the Commission information on approaches to pollinator conservation. He stated that one-third of all the food people eat comes as the result of pollinators and that many of the foods we eat would not be around if not for bees, butterflies, and other insect pollinators and pollinating birds. He stated that ways in which people can help pollinators to by providing food in the form of pollinator gardens, sheltering techniques for both summer and winter, and limiting the use of pesticides.

Ms. Johnson asked if vector control for mosquitos affects bee populations. Mr. Kinzler stated that he was not positive of the impacts of current vector control spraying but that insecticides in general have more toxicity to pollinators than other pesticides.

Mr. Utecht asked what square footage acreage was needed to maintain a stable pollinator base. Mr. Kinzler answered that he wasn't aware of any figures but that they are probably out there and that it would be an interesting question to investigate.

Ms. Grant asked if Extension works with different park districts in the area to assist in developing pollinator-friendly planting. Mr. Kinzler stated that he was unaware of any collaboration efforts but stated that, in many cases, it would be an easy transition to integrate pollinator sustainers and switching up some of the varieties of plants and flowers.

7. Pollinator Habitat Issue Brief and Snapshot

Ms. Lipetzky provided the Commission information on an issue brief and snapshot developed for pollinator habitats. She stated that an excellent resource is the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources Pollinator Plan that has nine action steps on how to maintain pollinator habitats. She indicated that one of the top actions that benefit pollinators is to protect and restore natural areas, including planting trees and pollinator-friendly plants, as well as prairies and wetland restoration. She also indicated that NDSU and NDSU Extension have a number of resources.

Ms. Lipetzky informed the Commission of a number of local initiatives including: a pollinator garden at the Moorhead Country Club, Clay County Community Solar Gardens, Plains Art Museum Buzz Lab, Public Art Saint Paul: Bee Real Bee Everywhere, and the Longspur Prairie Fund Annual Bee Hunt. She also provided information on different promotions including World Bee Day on May 20, World Honey Bee Day on August 15, and National Pollinator Week the third week in June.

8. Public Comment Opportunity

Chair Thorstad informed the Commission that time would be allotted for public comments.

No comments were made.

9. Commission and Steering Committee Roundtable

Chair Thorstad asked for the Commission and the steering committee to share any additional updates.

Ms. Harden mentioned that the Northern Plains Botanical Society was doing a fundraiser for their Edible Forest on September 28 from 2:00 to 5:00 PM. She also highlighted an MPR news story on the work of Growing Together.

10. Commission Action Steps

Chair Thorstad stated that the next Commission meeting would be held on November 13. He also mentioned that the next First Fridays event would be held on October 4, 8:00 AM at Theatre B in Moorhead.

Chair Thorstad adjourned the meeting at 11:42 AM.

Single Use Materials

Cass-Clay Community Snapshot

September 2019

Introduction

About 40 percent of all plastic produced is used in packaging and most of this packaging has been designed to be used only once.¹ Most of it ends up in our landfills, littered on the ground, or in our waterways. It can even break down into tiny pieces called microplastics and make its way into the soil or the stomachs of wildlife. Much of this plastic packaging is not biodegradable and will remain in the environment for hundreds of years.

With increasing consumer awareness of the downsides of single use plastics and other packaging material like polystyrene foam (commonly referred to by the brand name “Styrofoam”), has caused companies, governments, and individuals to take action to reduce these **single use materials**.

Various types of packaging exist, but this community snapshot will focus on those used to serve food and beverages. Restaurants, coffee shops, grocery stores, and other retailers in the Fargo-Moorhead area have initiated changes to reduce single use materials, but there are further actions the community can take to reduce our dependence on these materials and the effect they have on our environment.

Initiatives in Cass-Clay Addressing Single Use Materials

Community Education

F-M Plastic Bag Task Force: This task force, initiated by Clay County, is a nonprofit organization focused on educating the public on plastic consumption and how to recycle different types of plastic. It implemented the Boomerang Bag Program which provides free reusable bags at stores where there are plastic bag recycling drop-offs. They have launched “A Day Without a Bag” campaign to start a conversation about plastic bag usage where individuals can recycle their plastic bags at specific grocery stores in exchange for a reusable bag. In February 2019, the task force challenged fifth graders in the area to collect plastic bags to recycle.

Contact: Darla Lewandowski, F-M Plastic Bag Task Force Coordinator, 218-299-7279

<https://www.facebook.com/ClayCoPlasticBagTaskForce/>

MinnKota EnviroServices: This local recycling center services commercial recycling pick-ups in the Fargo-Moorhead area and is the drop-off point for Fargo-Moorhead’s residential services. In 2017, the company switched to no-sort recycling, with all types of household or commercial recycling collected in one bin, which caused a threefold increase in recycling usage. MinnKota actively promotes recycling awareness projects such as Earth Day, Arbor Day, and America Recycles Day, tours of the MinnKota Recycling facility are available by appointment, and a MinnKota representative is available for schools or community organization presentations pertaining to the recycling industry and its benefits. Their representatives have spoken at the Chamber of Commerce, civic organizations, and provided direct training for businesses, to name a few.

<https://www.minnkotarecycling.com/recycling>

¹ National Geographic. Howard B, et al. A running list of action on plastic pollution (online). Published 2019 January 17.
<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/environment/2018/07/ocean-plastic-pollution-solutions/>

River Keepers: Years ago, their staff noticed bags getting caught in trees along the river, so a board member started the T-shirt to Tote Project, where volunteers make grocery tote bags out of gently used or new t-shirts that have been donated. Shoppers go home with hundreds of these bags each year at grocery stores near downtown Fargo, such as Prairie Roots Food Co-op, Swanson Health Products and Tochi Products, and at local events that River Keepers attends, like Midwest Kid Fest and the Fargo Police community picnic. To learn more about volunteering or making tote bags, email kimberly@riverkeepers.org or visit their website at <https://www.riverkeepers.org/volunteer/>

Food Retailers

Coffee Shops: Many coffee shops in the area provide a discount to customers who bring in their reusable coffee cups instead of taking disposable to-go cups, or conversely upcharge those who *do not* bring in a reusable cup. Disposable coffee cups are not recyclable due to the thin layer of plastic inside the cardboard cup that keeps the cup waterproof.

Convenience Stores: Many gas stations in the area, like Holiday Stationstores, will charge a lower price for coffee if a customer brings in their own travel mug.

Flannel Fizz: This local soda company has been selling its sodas at the Red River Market, the farmers market in downtown Fargo, and plans on expanding to selling to breweries in the future. They aim to be a zero waste business, so they serve their sodas in refillable growlers and provide a significant discount to customers who return their growlers to refill. Customers have embraced the company's waste reducing practices, and they have averaged a growler return rate of 65-70%.

Grocery Retailers: Most grocery stores contain shelves upon shelves of single use packaging, delis with to-go containers, and plastic bags at check-out.

- In Fargo, plastic shopping bags are accepted for recycling* at Cashwise Foods, Walmart, Hornbacher's, Family Fare, and Lowe's Home Improvement.
- In Moorhead, Cashwise Foods, Family Fare, Hornbacher's, Lowe's Home Improvement, Target, and Walmart accept plastic bags for recycling.*
- Many grocery stores offer shoppers an incentive for bringing in reusable bags, such as Hornbachers, which offers a 5-cent discount for every bag a shopper brings to use at checkout.
- *Prairie Roots Food Co-op:* this local food cooperative has recently gone bagless! They provide t-shirt totes from River Keepers and empty product boxes for customers who do not have reusable bags at checkout. Their deli has recyclable to-go containers as well as washable plates, glasses, and silverware for customers eating in their community room. They encourage customers to bring in their own containers to fill at their bulk section and offer small glass mason jars and spice jars for purchase. The store recently introduced a "Take a Jar, Leave a Jar" station in their Bulk Department where shoppers can drop off jars for others to use after being cleaned and sanitized by staff.
- *Natural Grocers:* this natural foods store in Fargo provides empty product boxes for customers at check-out - no plastic bags.

*See section below called *What can I do?* for a list of additional plastic packaging materials that can be recycled at these grocery retailers and businesses

Governments and Nonprofits

North Dakota: In March 2019, the State Legislature passed a bill (HB 1200) which the governor signed into law that placed a ban on the ban of certain plastics. It restricts cities and counties from, among other measures, banning plastic straws and banning or taxing plastic bags. The bill was introduced by a Minot lawmaker who owns waste-hauling and landfill businesses, and proponents of the bill want to stop a “potential patchwork of regulations across the state and undue burden on businesses.” The city of Minot was considering a 5-cent plastic bag tax which they will no longer be able to implement. Opponents of the bill would rather have the issue remain under local control and not be regulated at the state level. (*Note: this is the only instance in this Community Snapshot that would not reduce the use of single use materials.*)

<https://www.grandforksherald.com/news/government-and-politics/4587521-paper-or-plastic-north-dakota-senate-says-cities-cant-ban>

<https://www.kfyrtv.com/content/news/Senate-votes-to-ban-cities-from-banning-or-taxing-plastic-bags-straws-507426351.html>

<https://www.valleynewslive.com/content/news/Bill-prohibits-communities-from-restricting-plastic-bag-use-507454801.html>

Red River Market: This farmers market in downtown Fargo strives to be a landfill-free event where nothing enters the landfill. All disposable materials must be compostable or recyclable. With an estimated attendance of more than 7,000 people per Saturday throughout the summer, this event has an impact on that day’s landfill contents. They also have booths to educate consumers on how to recycle materials.

The event lacks enough composting space for all its disposable materials, so some of it ends up in the landfill. A municipal composting site would fill this gap for the farmers market.

www.redriver.market

Businesses and Schools

Blackbird Pizza: The owner’s daughter noticed the number of plastic straws that get thrown away, which led this restaurant in downtown Fargo to provide straws to customers only if they request one. Further, they started using reusable plastic lids in the kitchen instead of disposable plastic wrap.

<https://www.kvrr.com/2018/03/22/plastic-straws-plastic-bags/>

Concordia College: This Moorhead university’s Dining Services has single use materials in mind when creating policies. They have a “Green-to-Go” program where students can pay a refundable \$5 deposit to their dining hall and receive a card that can be traded for a to-go container. When the dirty container is returned, the dining hall will take it back to wash it and the student receives their card back in exchange. Students can get their \$5 back if they want to stop participating in the program.

The dining hall also has EcoTensil tasting spoons instead of small plastic spoons to reduce plastic waste.

<https://www.concordiacollege.edu/student-life/dining-services/sustainability-in-dining/>

Essentia Health: This area hospital experiences 1,000 transactions per day in its cafeteria along with 300-400 room service orders. Their new dining services manager has already begun reducing their polystyrene foam use by transitioning to plastic cups in their dining area as well as selling reusable mugs. This has reduced costs and disposable cup usage. They are looking for more ways to reduce their single use materials and would welcome the addition of a compost facility to accommodate compostable materials.

<https://www.essentiahealth.org/>

Granite City Food and Brewery: This Fargo restaurant is trying to get rid of plastic straws completely and transition to paper straws.

<https://www.gcfb.com/location/fargo-north-dakota/>

Healthy Food Ingredients: this Fargo company that sells specialty ingredient brands internationally has a mission to be stewards of the land, and this affects how they think of using single use materials in packaging. A large portion of their business is “bulk” business, meaning they package or sell products in bulk hopper, totes or 50 pound bags. By shipping bulk, they use much less packaging material. They recently added compactors at two facilities and are able to bale totes and cardboard to ship by the truckload to recycling. They also have recently switched the workers’ disposable gloves at their Valley City processing facility to the biodegradable version.

<https://www.hfifamily.com/our-stewardship/sustainability/>

HoDo Restaurant and HoDo Lounge: This Fargo eatery has tabletop signs stating “Plastic Straws Available Upon Request” and lists the following facts about plastic straw usage:

Each day we use 500,000,000 straws. Enough straws to fill 46,400 large school buses per year! Straws are among the TOP 10 marine debris items. A massive island of garbage over two times the size of the state of Texas is floating in the Pacific Ocean. Plastic constitutes 90% of all trash floating in the world’s oceans. Check out these websites to educate yourself more on this topic: StrawlessOcean.org / BeStrawFree.org / OneLessStraw.org

<https://www.hoteldonaldson.com/>

Microsoft: Their local campus’ dining center made the decision to have no straws on campus and all their cups and to-go containers are compostable. Similar to the Red River Market (see above), a municipal or commercial composting site would aid in keeping compostable materials out of the landfill.

Minnesota State University Moorhead (MSUM): This university has a similar Dining Services program to Concordia College (see above). The Green Box Program allows students to purchase a to-go container that can be returned to be washed by Dining Services and students take a clean to-go container in return.

<https://www.mnstate.edu/student-life/dining/>

Nichole’s Fine Pastry: This bakery near downtown Fargo has moved to using paper bags for carry out orders instead of plastic bags.

<https://www.nicholesfinepastry.com/>

Sanford Health: One and a half years ago, the hospital’s two largest medical centers moved to compostable to-go containers. These two campuses use no polystyrene foam. The South University campus is upgrading its dining services and will move to these products as well. Additionally, staff members have put up signs in a few dining areas asking customers to refrain from plastic straw use.

<https://www.sanfordhealth.org/>

US Foods: This national foodservice distributor has made a commitment to sustainability with their Serve Good program. Two initiatives within the program, Responsible Disposables and Packaging Standards, focus on responsible sourcing of packaging materials along with waste reduction. Their line of Responsible Disposables contains a minimum of 35% post-consumer content along with other compostable and renewable materials. For example, they offer clients a plant-based straw that composts in 90 days and a fiber-flax towel. To learn more, visit their website:

<https://www.usfoods.com/why-us-foods/serve-good.html>

Community Actions

- Local governments can:
 - Create policies for their jurisdictions that limit single use materials at city or county functions.
 - Push for a local municipal or commercial composting site so biodegradable materials can be composted locally. Without a composting site, these materials end up in the landfill since they cannot be recycled. (*Note: **compostable plastics** are only compostable in commercial high heat facilities while unbleached plant fiber, bamboo, and wood materials are compostable without the high heat.*)
 - Provide resources to consumers and businesses on how to reduce their single use materials. This serves the local governments by reducing the load on local landfills and recycling services.
 - Provide consumers with additional recycling education to lessen recycling contamination.
 - Assist local businesses to start as a waste-free, low-waste business or work with existing businesses to move toward that goal. Working with the Chamber of Commerce or the Small Business Association might help in growing such programs.
 - Provide incentives for businesses to reduce these materials or ban certain single use materials (like a plastic bag or a plastic straw ban).
 - Recognize businesses for their voluntary efforts to reduce single use materials.
- Businesses can educate consumers about single use materials or create financial incentives for reductions, like reducing grocery bills when consumers bring reusable bags or charging less for a cup of coffee in a reusable cup
- Food retailers can request large providers like Sodexo, Sam's Club, or Costco carry containers and to-go packaging that is recyclable or biodegradable

What can I do?

- Eliminate plastic straws. Decline straws at restaurants and purchase a washable metal or silicone straw for home if you cannot do without
- Bring your own reusable to-go containers when eating out
- Encourage your favorite restaurants to ditch the polystyrene foam and move to recyclable plastic or washable materials
- Use reusable produce bags and shopping bags at the grocery store
- Buy from bulk bins whenever possible and bring in your own containers to fill
- Reduce your purchases of convenience foods that are wrapped in plastic
- Buy meat and cheese from the deli and have them wrapped in paper
- Carry a reusable water bottle wherever you go so you can avoid using plastic water bottles
- Purchase drinks in glass bottles instead of plastic
- Pack your lunch or leftovers in reusable wrappers made of beeswax or cloth
- Bring washable silverware in your lunch to work or school to cut down on plasticware
- Recycle as much plastic packaging material as possible. Acceptable items you can drop off at grocery retailer recycling locations (see above)::
 - Carryout bags / plastic shopping bags, produce bags, bread bags, product overwrap, shrink wrap
 - Dry cleaning bags, case wrap, air pillows, newspaper bags, bubble wrap
 - Any #4 plastic film or packaging

Resources

Cass County Plastics Recycling <http://fargond.gov/city-government/departments/solid-waste/residential-recycling/plastic-bags-other-items>

Clay County Plastics Recycling
<https://claycountymn.gov/1457/Plastic-Bags-Film-Packaging>

Single Use Plastics - A roadmap to sustainability (UN Environment Program 2018)
https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/25496/singleUsePlastic_sustainability.pdf

World Centric - Biocompostables
<http://www.worldcentric.org/biocompostables/bioplastics>

For more information, please contact Kim Lipetzky with the Fargo Cass Public Health Office at 701-241-8195 or klipetzky@fargond.gov

2019 Hunger & Health Summit



our vision to end hunger

We see a healthy community built on collaborative solutions that supports equitable access to food while addressing the root causes of hunger.

Who we are

The Cass Clay Hunger Coalition was re-imagined in late 2018 to represent and convene **all** hunger relief champions in our area.

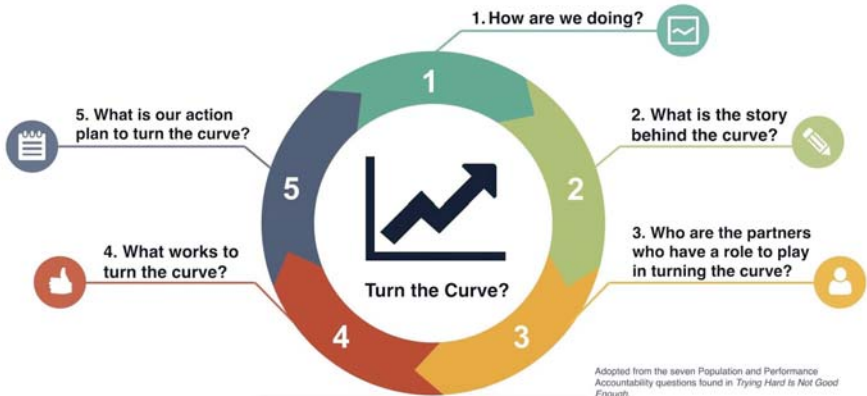
Our membership includes over 35 local organizations working to improve the health, wellness, and livelihoods of those living in Cass and Clay counties. Organizations include school nutrition programs, local businesses, healthcare partners, charitable feeding organizations, community services, local non-profit groups, and many more passionate partners.

We work collectively to magnify our impact and know that together, we can end hunger for our neighbors in Cass and Clay counties.

How we work

To commit to lasting, systemic change, our strategy is built upon a proven framework, Results Based Accountability.

This has organized the way we imagine the future and take action to improve individual outcomes and the community as a whole.

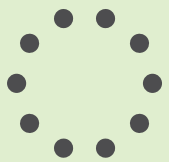


guiding principles

We've committed to working collaboratively to move the needle on hunger in four strategic ways: by improving food security, increasing food access, working at the intersection of hunger and health, and building community awareness and engagement around hunger.



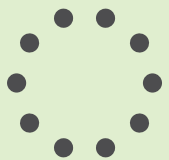
Results Based Accountability asks organizations to first imagine the final goal or end result they would like to see come to fruition in their communities. By working backwards from this goal, our strategies are intentional and measurable. Accountability to data and effecting a tangible outcome are essential components of this process.



Food Insecurity

End Result: Everyone in Cass-Clay is and will continue to be food secure.

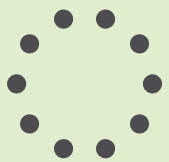
Strategy: Expanded screenings for the root causes of hunger.



Food Access

End Result: Everyone has equitable access to food that meets their needs.

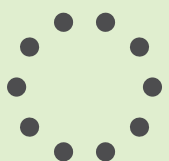
Strategy: Supporting access to new and existing emergency food programs.



Hunger & Health

End Result: Our community actively supports practices and policies that recognize hunger as a health crisis.

Strategy: Analyze current practices and policies to establish a guiding framework.



Awareness & Engagement

End Result: Everyone is knowledgeable about hunger as an issue in our community year-round.

Strategy: Launch a digital campaign and engage in hosted and attended local events.