



## The Real Dirt

### Understanding the Food System of the Treasure Valley: A Community Food Assessment



Many people are concerned about the food they eat, but our complex food system makes it very difficult to learn much about it or to make meaningful changes to what is available. We lack the information necessary to make thoughtful decisions about the food that sustains us and our future. The Treasure Valley Food Coalition is gathering data to help us make better decisions and to make our community food system more secure.

### Community Event

#### Phase 1: Understanding Local Food Economics

Rose Room, 718 West Idaho Street, Boise, ID 83702

Thursday, June 3, 2010

7:30-9:00PM

The community is invited to this free event to hear Ken Meter of the Crossroads Resource Institute in Minneapolis report on the economics of our food and agriculture systems in the Treasure Valley. Ken will report on the economics of our food and agriculture systems in the Treasure Valley. We will learn how much money is spent on food in the community, where the food comes from, and the potential for economic development and job creation by eating more locally-grown food. This phase will provide an economic baseline for measuring progress.

*Funding for phase one began with the 2009 City Harvest Celebration. This annual event connects the community with local food, food-producers and artists to celebrate our rich agricultural heritage. The 2010 City Harvest Celebration on September 4, 2010 and other events will help fund phase two.*

#### Phase 2: Understanding Food from Farm to Plate Sept 2011

This phase will help us learn about our local farmers, what they grow, and how our land is used. We'll learn who lives in the Treasure Valley, the extent of diet-related health issues, who is hungry and how they are fed. We'll understand how food is transported and distributed in the Treasure Valley and what happens to the food waste. The report will discuss the processing and retailing infrastructure in the valley and consider the opportunities for increasing the production and consumption of local food.

#### Benefits of a Community Food Assessment

A comprehensive report of the food system activities in the Treasure Valley will give our community members, planners and policy makers more tools to make informed decisions. We anticipate the development of sustainable programs that not only better meet community needs, but also integrate public health and nutrition, economic development and environmental stewardship.

**We are currently raising funds to support phase two of this work. Your tax-deductible contribution will help provide a food-secure future for us and our children. Treasure Valley Food Coalition is a program of Sustainable Community Connections (SCC). SCC is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization.**



#### Don't we already know about our food and how to change our food system?

The system is so complex and segmented no one knows much about how food is produced and consumed in the Treasure Valley. Much of it is in plain sight, but not in one place.

The assessment will compile existing data from various sources, like the census of agriculture and the Economic Research Service of the USDA and put it into one document. This reference will allow us to make better decisions and plans. For example, in Everyone Eats! A Community Food Assessment for Areas of North and Northeast Portland, Oregon recommendations for "Access to Healthy Foods for All" include this objective: Increase communication and collaboration between local growers and emergency food providers to enhance access to fresh, nutritious foods for low-income clients. This could include connecting more small farms with Oregon Food Bank's Harvest Share or Farmers Ending Hunger Programs.