

**NEW ENGLAND MADE**  
**Tuesday, Nov. 10, SPACE Gallery**  
*Linking Food Producers, Regional Manufacturers, and Independent Retailers*  
*Organized by the New England Local Business Forum (nelbf.org)*

**SUMMARY OF BREAK-OUT SESSIONS**

**Break-Out Session: Sustaining Small-Scale, Local Fishing**

What can we do in our own communities and at the regional level? With Karen Marzloff of Seacoast Local and Niaz Dorry of the Northwest Atlantic Marine Alliance.

What's working

- CSFs
  - price point: consumer pays same, or less, than they would at market, fishermen are getting paid more than they would at auction
  - let's the fishermen re-imagine what a successful day is: stop seeing pounds of fish as the money maker, start seeing customers as the money maker. Imagine that 1,000 lbs is what they need to take home, because they've got X customers at X price point, vs. needing to take home 10,000 lbs to sell at auction.
  - organizing bodies can provide funding and technical assistance for best practices among fishermen
  - can provide consumer information on cooking, storing, freezing, etc. among consumers
- Programs: festivals, throwdowns, etc.: offers opportunity for conversation and engagement, involving fishermen, consumers, restaurants, markets and a wide range of engaged parties throughout the community
- Pride and history
- Community building--getting more folks to help carry the ball
- Beginning to partner with the agriculture economy--shared values and common goals
- Can learn from the mistakes of the farm crisis, figure out steps a lot quicker (alternative distribution, buying clubs, etc.)
- Percent of "good players" on the water is greater than bad
- New England is currently still home to small-scale, local fishing.

What isn't working

- Seafood festivals that don't use New England Seafood
- Sourcing isn't identifiable or local
- Some species are still seen as "poor people food"
- Loss of processing and other infrastructure
- Image of fishermen as the bad guy ("overfishing" is the common term, rather than "mismanagement," even though fishermen have been fishing under management for 30 years)
- "Charismatic megafauna" gets the press coverage, not local communities and

- public commons. Need to stop framing it as one vs. the other.
- Are losing New England sense of ownership of our public commons, due to lack of contemporary connection with fish and fishermen
- Lack of available information and discussion around issues of coastal development, global climate change, etc., and the impact these may have on the Gulf of Maine

#### New ideas

- Preservation groups--working on relief funds, permit banking, etc.
- New ideas should be all-inclusive: price, accessibility, social justice, species of fish, etc.
- Help fishermen participate in the value-added market place (production, flash freezing, etc.); "the shrimp fisherman has to go to market with a totally different approach. There are people out there who will pay a little extra for the story (but it must be genuine)." (story should include that local, small scale fish is fresher and healthier)
- Look at merging our seafood product into the "local economy"; if we don't, we're talking about leakage of money, jobs and food
- Education: the ocean is a resource that's always changing, and the marketplace is filled with many well-intentioned misperceptions
- Low-income families: this is a local food source that is often very affordable
  - many species are among the lowest cost proteins available
  - fresh fish is considered expensive, but a pound of fresh haddock is 50 percent less than a pound of fish sticks; help consumers with understanding that value.
- Address the price issue: there came a point when supermarket prices artificially dropped, and we've been using that as our point of comparison. how do we educate about the hidden costs? Niaz used the example of talking with textile workers about organic and non-organic cotton balls, and the impact its had on lives of factory workers, farmers, residents of communities with incinerators, etc. Then \$3 for a bag of organic cotton balls seems not unreasonable. One small change a year is possible within even the tightest budgets, and does make a difference.
- Help all of New England "own" our public commons and seafood resources
- Accessing jobs programs, for things like infrastructure, hand processing of shrimp, etc.
- Identify broad range of groups to bring in as partners

### **Break-Out Session: Evolving with the 10% Shift**

Leveraging this effective campaign for the holidays and 2010. With Joe Grafton of Somerville Local First.

Things we did well:

- Catalyzing energy in communities
- Gained political access and support
- Media outreach, especially local and independent media
- Ran successful events (Shift Mobs)

Things to do better:

- Number of signatures on site is LOW based on the coverage and promotion
- Ingraining the Shift messaging into organizational communications

Things to work on:

- Need to analyze web statistics to see how many hits we're getting vs. how many signatures. Where are we losing people, which pages, etc
- Revise the splash page on the shift site that demonstrate the participating organizations
- More lead time in discussion to engage more networks in activities
- Leveraging and training the reach of our business members to carry forward the shift message.
- Learn from the success of the 350 campaigns marketing. How can we replicate their success?

## **Break-Out Session: Reviving New England Manufacturing**

Strategic discussion with Stephanie Volo of Planet Dog, Jeremy Litchfield of Atayne, Stefan Apse of the EF Schumacher Society, and Stacy Mitchell of ILSR.

We heard from two businesses that design and develop products and are intent on having them manufactured in New England. Planet Dog has managed to move a substantial share of its manufacturing to facilities in Maine and Massachusetts that it subcontracts with, but it's been a long road to get to that point with a number of challenges along the way. Atayne wants to manufacture regionally, but has encountered obstacles. One is that the scale of mills is often far too large for their production runs. Indeed, many of the mills still running are working on military contracts and thus quite large scale runs. Another challenge is that the region's manufacturing capacity has been so reduced that it can be difficult to find mills that do the particular types of stitches or other work that you need.

The primary thing that came out of this discussion was the need to continue the conversation and to include many more people. This was an interesting window on the challenges facing producers who want to produce here. In previous discussions, we have focused on the challenges facing retailers who would like to source more regionally, but don't necessarily have the time or means to seek out the products they need or to identify what is being made here.

It's clear that creating some kind of forum or exchange or online resource would be a good step -- a place that could 1) connect producers so they can share information about the region's manufacturing capacity and perhaps even develop cooperative relationships to expand that capacity; 2) allow retailers to find regional producers; and 3) facilitate an ongoing exchange about how to rebuild this sector and what the needs are.

But at this stage more conversations are needed to figure out exactly what such an exchange would do and how it would be organized.