



Food & Nutrition *Insight*

Winter 2010

A quarterly newsletter for
Washington State
Food and Nutrition Council

The Proposed Candy Tax - an Answer to Our Budget Crisis?

By Claire Leamy

In Washington State, under the eyes of the law, candy and gum are currently considered "food" and therefore exempt from the state sales tax. This may soon change. In an attempt to alleviate the \$2.6 billion budget deficit, a tax on candy is being proposed in the State Senate. This new tax is estimated to generate up to \$28 million in the first year. The "candy tax" revenue would go towards medical and dental benefits for low income Washingtonians.

The proposed and controversial "candy tax," officially known as **Senate Bill 6189**, introduced during the last legislative session by Senator Jeanne Kohl-Wells, would impose an 8% sales tax on candy and gum. There are many persuasive arguments for and against this tax. Some proponents believe this tax will discourage unhealthy eating. Based on the "sin tax" on cigarettes and subsequent decline in cigarette consumption, the belief is increased taxation will reduce candy consumption. However along with the increased cigarette taxes came a surge of anti-smoking education, stronger restrictions on cigarette advertising, and a shift in attitudes about the social acceptability of smoking.

Most importantly, SB 6189 would not put money into nutrition education or funding healthier alternatives to candy.

Washington State isn't the first to attempt to put a tax on "junk food" nor is it the first to meet such a proposal with resistance. Last year New York Governor David Paterson proposed an 18% soda tax with the same budget-balancing intentions. After overwhelming

public resistance, as well as resistance from the beverage industry, he eventually abandoned the idea.

Another argument for the tax states: candy isn't food and if it isn't food it gets taxed. "I don't think candy and gum are foods," said Rep. Jim Moeller, a Vancouver Democrat who introduced the proposal. "I think (the tax) gives us an opportunity to change some of the cultural thinking about it, and at the same time raise some money." With US residents being diagnosed with type 2 diabetes, a disease directly related to diet, at epidemic numbers and 25% of Washington State adult residents qualifying as "obese" in 2007, we need to make some changes in the way American's eat.

But, even if we want to attempt to change the way our culture looks at food, is taxing "bad foods" the way to go?

Is there a more effective way to prevent these health problems plaguing Washingtonians? In my work as a community health educator teaching nutrition and cooking classes I have seen people make drastic changes in their diets after becoming more informed about the consequences of their choices. Last quarter we had an entire family agree to eliminate soda from their household, where it used to be a staple, after they learned about the potential problems caused by drinking soda with every meal. Of course education is only the first step. Healthier food options also need to be available, accessible, affordable and appealing for people to choose them over "junk food."

As for the issue of raising revenue to fill the

Continued on page 4

Letter from our co-presidents



Kirsten Leng and Acacia Larsen, Co-Presidents



Warmest Greetings
in the New Year!

2009 was a sobering year for our State and our Nation. We saw climbing rates of hunger and food insecurity, particularly among our most vulnerable populations. As the need climbed, budgets and vital programming were cut preventing many from getting the services they needed. But as we reflect upon 2009, we cannot forget the positive headway that was made and the opportunities that await us in the New Year:

- Our nation is the closest it has ever been to health care reform and providing health insurance to the majority of Americans.
- Our First Lady, Michelle Obama, has made food, real food, and nutrition a national priority.
- For the first time since 1995, school nutrition standards may be updated following the Institute of Medicine's recommendations on how to better align school nutrition with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- The 2009 FDA Food Code integrates the national food safety system with state and local agencies to ensure a safe food supply.

Food, nutrition and agriculture are at the core of this year's issues and debates, and WSFNC will continue to advocate for positive change. Carrie Pfab, Maternal and Child Health Legislative Co-Chair and Jenna Umbriac, Agricultural Co-Chair will lead this charge.

WSFNC will also be taking time in the New Year to look inward, reflect upon our past, and plan for our future. The Board will be attending a retreat this winter to determine how we can better serve our members. At-Large Member Anne Lund, is spearheading this process. If you have thoughts on how WSFNC can better serve you, please contact Anne at ael4@u.washington.edu

We will use the results of the retreat to revitalize our website, a process that has already been started by our new Webmaster Amy Putiri. The WSFNC board would like to extend a special "Thanks" to Beth Ogata who has been managing our website for several years and has trained Amy to take on this role. Beth, you have been a huge asset to WSFNC and we appreciate your commitment to the organization – Thank You!

After the huge success of our 2009 Annual Conference, we are excited to start planning for 2010. At-Large member Chau Brodnan and Jenna Umbriac are Co-Chairing the conference this year. We're excited about the energy this duo brings to the board and can't wait to see what they cook-up! If you are interested in participating on the conference planning committee, please contact them at chau.brodnan@bastyr.edu or jenna.umbriac@bastyr.edu

The nominating committee, Chair Claire Leamy, Gretchen Hawley

and Jennu Tucci, will be working on putting together a slate of candidates for the 2010-2011 year soon. Open positions include: President-Elect, Secretary, Nominating Committee and At-Large Member. Please contact Claire if you are interested in serving on the board at clairel@solid-ground.org

And finally, our "behind-the-scenes" board members, including Past-President Betty Lucas, President-Elect Adrienne Dorf, Treasurer Cheryl Polasek, Secretary Shirley Broughton, Membership Chair Lynne Smith, Newsletter Chair Kristen Rezabek and Fundraising Chair Shawn Peterson, continue to provide amazing leadership, guidance and innovation!

We look forward to an exciting year of growth and opportunity. As always, please feel free to contact us with your thoughts.

Happy New Year!



Contact us:

www.wsfnc.org
pres@wsfnc.org or
editor@wsfnc.org

The Washington State Food and Nutrition Council is an organization which advocates for food, agriculture, and nutrition programs, services, and education. The Council enhances its members' and the general public's ability to discern nutrition issues and related public policy issues which impact the lives of Washington state residents.

Legislative Update



State Budget Continues to be a Challenge for Hunger and Nutrition Programs

By Carrie Pfab

When Governor Gregoire released her budget proposal on December 9, 2009, there was significant impact to hunger and nutrition programs in Washington State. Many advocates were in disbelief as to the extent of the cuts, but the Governor herself even admitted it was a budget that did not reflect her values. By law, the Governor must submit a balanced budget that reflects currently available revenue. Included in this original budget was the reduction in positions at the local Commu-

nity Services Offices for DSHS which would affect the timeliness of people receiving benefits, reductions to the Apple Kids for Health program, the elimination of the Basic Health Program, a reduction in the Senior Citizens Services Act funding, and the suspension of the Maternity Support Services program that provides support and linkages for high risk pregnant women.

With the legislative session kicking off on Monday, January, 11 the work on passing an adequate budget has begun. Governor Gregoire gave her 'State of the State' address Tuesday, January 12 in which she talked about her revised budget that she submitted the same day. This new budget includes working with the legislature to secure

additional revenue that will allow the restoration of much needed programs. Although there are still significant proposed cuts, the new version of the Governor's budget released January 12, includes the restoration of the cuts to Apple Kids for Health, the Basic Health plan, the Senior Citizens Services Act, and the Maternity Support Services Program.

This legislative session is a 'short' session, meaning it only lasts for 60 days. Things will be moving fast and it's crucial for our elected officials to hear from their constituents regularly. Make your voice heard!

To find out who represents you, visit <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/DistrictFinder/Default.aspx>

Larsen Introduces Legislation to Fight Child Hunger

On December 10, 2009 U.S. Representative Rick Larsen introduced legislation to improve low-income children's access to nutritious after-school meals and snacks. HR 4274: Ensuring All Students Year-round (EASY) Access to Meals and Snacks Act, would amend the Child Nutrition Act to allow organizations that serve meals during the summer to also receive federal reimbursement for up to one meal and one snack served during after-school programs, thus improving nutrition for this potentially vulnerable population.

Under current law, organizations that run summer programs can receive federal reimbursement for the meals they provide to low-income children through the Summer Food Service Program. During the school year, however, these same organizations have to apply for reimbursement through a separate program, the Child and Adult Care Food Program, and then only receive approximately 70 cents for each snack they provide to a low-income child. Some organizations simply opt not to apply for federal reimbursement for snacks during the school year because the paperwork is too cumbersome and the reimbursement rates are so low.

Currently, this legislation has been referred to the House Committee on Education and Labor for further action



Member Update

Kelly Horton,
former WSFNC

Legislative Co-Chair has been named a 2009-2010 [Health and Aging Policy Fellow](#).

Kelly has accepted an offer to spend her fellowship in the United States Department of Agriculture/Food and Nutrition Services' (FNS) Office of Strategic Initiatives, Partnerships and Outreach. During the next year, Horton will focus on FNS policy initiatives for the administration.

The Health and Aging Policy Fellows Program is a unique opportunity for profes-



sionals in health and aging to receive experience and skills necessary to make a positive contribution to the development and

implementation of health policies affecting older Americans. Its fellows participate in the [American Political Science Association Congressional Fellowship Program](#). The nine-to-12-month Program offers fellows the opportunity to participate in the policymaking process on either the Federal or state level as legislative assistants in Congress, professional staff members in executive agencies or policy organizations.

Congratulations to Kelly, we know she will make an impact in her new role at USDA/FNS.

(Candy tax continued from page 1)

budget gap, some argue adding another sales tax is inherently regressive. Sales taxes end up costing low income people a higher percentage of their income since the "basic essentials" are priced similarly per geographic region. A more sustainable and just solution for our budget problems may be implementing a fairer or more progressive tax system in Washington State to solve the budget gap.

On a larger scale we should examine our federal policies in regards to food subsidies and their effects on our national budget and national health. Currently we heavily subsidize corn syrup production by promoting corn subsidies in the Farm Bill. According to the Cato Institute report on Archer Daniel's Midland, for every \$1 of profit ADM makes on corn syrup the taxpayers contribute \$10 in subsidies. A tax on soda and candy really constitutes double taxation on tax paying consumers.

Making healthy food affordable is also necessary to make a real change in Americans' health. Repeatedly people in our community health classes explain fresh fruits and vegetables are too expensive to eat everyday. We all know food costs are rising. But did you know produce and other lower-energy higher nutrient foods are increasing in price faster and are more expensive per calorie than "junk food?" As published in the New York Times, over a two-year study period lower calorie/ higher nutrient foods increased in price by 19.5 percent, while high-calorie foods with low nutrient value dropped in price over the same period by 1.8 percent. This disproportionate increase in price for healthy foods must be reversed if we want people to eat healthier diets.

Increasing the price of sugary treats to more accurately reflect its cost to individuals and our society may discourage some people from eating these treats as often. But we need to ask ourselves, who should foot the bill for the medical costs incurred by the American diet; individuals or corporations who make money off the sale of these products? And how will we make healthy foods accessible and affordable for all Americans?

Whether or not you support the SB 6189- the state legislature is back in session in Olympia and we urge you all to let your voice be heard. Find your State Legislators at www.leg.wa.gov and tell them what you think.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/science/la-sci-junk-food-tax23-2009aug23,0,7059624.story>

<http://www.kirotv.com/politics/22081257/detail.html>

Nutrition, Physical Activity, & Obesity Prevention Program, Washington State Department of Health, February 2009.

Bovard, James. *Archer Daniels Midland, A Case Study in Corporate Welfare*, Cato Institute. September 26, 1995.

Parker-Pope, Tara. "A High Price for Healthy Food", *New York Times*. December 5, 2007

USDA Launches Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food Initiative

By Jenna Umbric

With an average distance of 1,500 miles separating the U.S. consumer from the farm on which his/her food is grown, it's no wonder the American public is disconnected from the meals on its plates. The USDA's new initiative, [Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food](#), seeks to bridge this divide and bring local producers and consumers together to create new economic opportunities, strengthen rural communities, promote healthy eating, and protect natural resources. Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food (KYF²) includes novel loan and grant programs as well as highlighting some the USDA has had available in the past.

Many of KYF's initiatives have already begun to infuse new funds into programs supporting local food systems across the country.

California Farm Link connects current farmers with those retiring from the agriculture business, and is one of the first to benefit from the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program that provides funds for educating farmers on building, maintaining, and financing farming enterprises. There is funding for the small farmer not yet eligible for commercial loans with targeted funds available to family farms and farms run by women and racial minorities. Under KYF, funds are available to assist communities in starting farmers markets and rural cooperatives. Loan programs have been designed to aide businesses that process local or regional food (defined as food processed within state or within 400-mile radius of where it is grown). Also, state-inspected meat and poultry

slaughterhouses with 25 or fewer employees will now be allowed to ship products across state lines without the hassle and expense of USDA inspection. Farmers Market Promotion programs will lend greater support to farmers market vouchers that allow women receiving nutrition care and low-income seniors to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables. KYF also includes a program awarding grants to increase the competitiveness of specialty crops.

The already existing Farm to School program has received some 50 million dollars from the 2008 farm bill. The KYF initiative includes programs to make it easier for schools to utilize this money. A large part of this effort includes the recently announced formation of USDA Farm to School Tactical Teams. These groups will travel the nation working with local and state authorities, farmers, and school

practices.

As important as all the dollar signs are to the success of this new USDA initiative, even more crucial is the dialogue being encouraged between farmers, consumers, state-run institutions, non-profits, and other stakeholders in the local food system. In December, the USDA partnered with the Michigan-based non-profit, Fair Food Network, in attempts to link this states small farmers to urban market opportunities. Additionally, the USDA is reaching out via the Internet in ways the agency hasn't done before. The USDA has invited anyone who has a suggestion, a question, or a success story involving local food systems to share their experiences on the KYF website. Deputy Secretary of Agriculture, Kathleen Merrigan hosted her first-ever live Facebook chat in which she answered inquiries submitted online. (You can see video of the chat on

YouTube or go to the link on the KYF website.) Here Merrigan detailed her hope that this new initiative will spark a nation-wide discussion. The USDA "doesn't pretend to know everything," she said before detailing plans to

traverse the country interviewing and learning from those involved in the creation of local food systems right where they live.

The Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food initiative and the opening of a farmers' market just blocks from the White House are symbols the U.S. government is starting to realize the positive impact local food systems can have on the health and well-being of our nation's citizens, environment and economy. Hopefully, these actions will be more than merely symbolic but true catalysts for the change our food system so desperately needs.



**KNOW YOUR FARMER
KNOW YOUR FOOD**

districts to find the best way to get more local foods onto students' meals trays. Other institutions are also benefiting from the KYF initiative. Grants have already begun working in states like Maryland where funds are being used to promote an increase in local foods within the MD hospital system. Work to conserve our country's farmland are also encouraged as part of KYF through the Farm and Ranch Lands Protection and the Sustainable Ag Research and Education (SARE) programs, the latter of which has been working since 1988 to support on-farm research and spread knowledge about sustainable agriculture

Fall calendar

Events of Local Interest

January 18, 2010

Poverty Action Day

Olympia, WA

[Statewide Poverty Action Network](#)

January 20, 2010

Continuing Education on Popular Dietary Supplements

Kelly Morrow, MS, RD

Spaghetti Factory, Lynnwood

5:30PM-8:00PM

[North Sound Dietetic Association](#)

January 29, 2010

Hunger Action Day

Olympia, WA

[Anti-Hunger and Nutrition Coalition](#)

March 10, 2010

Registered Dietitian Day

Bring it to the Table

Olympia, WA

[Washington State Dietetic Association](#)

March 17, 2010

Healthy Food Cooking Demo

Cynthia Lair

PCC, Edmonds

5:30PM-8:00PM

[North Sound Dietetic Association](#)

April 25-27, 2010

2010 Washington State Dietetic Association (WSDA) Convention

Double Tree Hotel, SeaTac

[Washington State Dietetic Association](#)

WSU Extension Programming Down But Not Out

By Jenna Umbriac

On November 24th, The Seattle Times reported the 2010 King County budget approved November 23rd had cut the allowance for WSU Extension programs, including 4-H, Master Gardner, and nutrition education services. The Extension had just received a considerable grant - \$1.2 million - from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to support a Food and Fitness Initiative. Suddenly WSU Extension was no longer able to offer essential services to our region's farmers, nutrition education to families of low-income status, gardening information to community members or the invaluable Puget Sound Fresh Program of the Cascade Harvest Coalition. In the subsequent months, the public outcry in support of the Extension's programs was tremendous and spurred a supplemental budget to be created. In the end, though King County WSU Extension funding was cut by 70 percent, because of overwhelming public support and strong partnerships with other county organizations, this and many of the Extension's other services will still be offered.

The 4-H program was also included in the approximately \$124,000 allocated in the revised budget. This service along with healthy living and forestry program offices are now being run out of office space in Renton shared with the Department of Development and Environmental Services. Other Extension services are also being run out of different locations. The Master Gardner program was taken under the wing of the Center for Urban Horticulture on the University of Washington campus. The diabetes education and immigrant farmer assistance programs have also been moved to other offices. It is important to note that only because of the public voice demanding these important services be preserved did King County not completely eliminate public funding for WSU Extension. We at WSFNC will continue to monitor the budget situation throughout the state and do our part to keep our members informed and aware of actions that can be taken to support such valuable programs in the future.

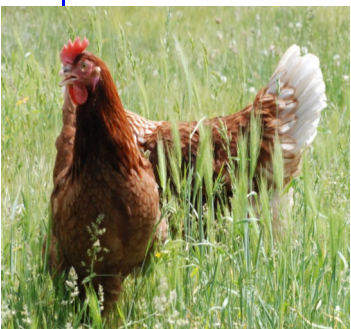
News From the Farm

By Kristen Rezabek

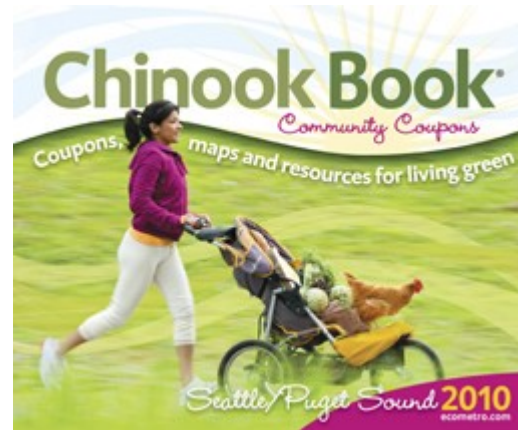
[Stiebrs Farms](#) is a family owned and operated cage free and organic egg farm. The farm was started in 1953 by Latvian immigrants Jan and Zelma Stiebrs and their children, Jon and Anita. They began with 100 hens and sold their farm fresh eggs door to door to neighbors and friends. The farm has now grown to 70 employees and has 4 generations of Stiebrs helping run the family business.

Stiebrs farming philosophy is to provide only the freshest, highest quality eggs to their customers. Employees gather eggs by hand and care for the animals. The chickens live a 100% cage-free lifestyle; living in large community hen houses and laying their eggs in nests. They are always free to run, perch, preen, dust, and socialize proudly. The farm is **Certified Humane** by Humane Farm Animal Care. Everyday five delivery trucks travel from the farm to Northern, Western and Southern Washington and Northern Oregon to drop off fresh Stiebrs eggs.

In addition to organic eggs, they also produce organic beef, and organic feed, all certified 100% Organic by the Washington State Department of Agriculture. They also own and operate their own certified organic feed mill to maintain the integrity of the organic egg program.



What is Chinook Book?



Chinook Book is a one-of-a-kind resource — a coupon book, a directory, a source of ideas and inspiration. It's your guide to living well and having fun in the Seattle metro region. Save hundreds of dollars while exploring the community and supporting local, sustainable businesses. All the products and services appearing in *Chinook Book* meet specific environmental and community criteria. Over 300 valuable coupons make this the largest book yet. Businesses with coupons include grocery, dining, entertainment, travel, garden and home adding up to savings of over \$3,000. (For more detailed information about the coupons go to www.ecometro.com/seattle/Chinook-Book) The book more than pays for itself – you will make your money back with use of the first few coupons.

The Washington State Food and Nutrition Council are selling Chinook books for only \$20! We will receive \$10 for every book sold. Help WSFNC and have fun at the same time! Chinook Books make great gifts for family, friends, and co-workers.

Contact Shawn Peterson for information on purchasing this great resource at: girlpeterson@comcast.net

Photos: Hailey, Steibrs founders Great granddaughter and Free Range Organic Hens

2009-2010 WSFNC Board

Co-Presidents

Acacia Larsen
Kirsten Leng

Past President

Betty Lucas

President Elect

Adrienne Dorf

Treasurer

Cheryl Polasek

Nominating Committee Chair

Claire Leamy

Secretary

Shirley Broughton

Nominating Committee member

Gretchen Hawley

Membership Directory Chair

Lynne Smith

At Large

Anne Lund

Nominating Committee member

Jen Tucci

Membership Recruitment Chair

Open

Newsletter

Kristen Rezabek

At Large

Chau Nguyen Brodnan

Webmasters

Amy Putiri (and Beth Ogata)

Legislative Co-Chair (MCH)

Carrie Pfab

Legislative Co-Chair (Agriculture)

Jenna Umbriac

Fund-Raising (Chinook Books)

Shawn Peterson

Volunteer Help Needed!

The annual WSFNC conference is coming up this September and we are looking for individuals to help us make this one the best yet! If you are interested in being a member of the conference committee contact one or both of our committee co-chairs:

Chau Brodnan

(chau.brodnan@bastyr.edu) or

Jenna Umbriac

(jenna.umbriac@bastyr.edu).

Thanks!



Seasonal Recipe: Caramel Apple Snack Cake

*Ingredients grown or produced locally, Recipe by Kristen Rezabek

Cake:

1 cup packed light brown sugar
1 cup granulated sugar
1 cup vegetable oil
1/2 cup applesauce*
3 eggs*
2 cups all purpose flour
1 cup whole wheat flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
2 teaspoons cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
5 Apples—Granny Smith, Honey Crisp, etc* - cored, diced into 1 inch chunks
2 teaspoons vanilla extract

Caramel Topping:

4 tablespoons butter
1/4 cup granulated sugar
1/4 cup light brown sugar

1/2 cup heavy cream

Pinch of salt

Directions:

Preheat oven to 325F. Grease a 9x13 inch pan. For cake, beat both sugars, oil, and applesauce together. Beat in eggs one at a time. Add dry ingredients and beat until just combined. Stir in apple chunks and vanilla. Pour into pan and bake about 1 hour or until tester inserted in middle is clean. Let cool.

To prepare topping, melt butter in sauce pan. Add sugars and salt and heat on medium for 2 minutes. Add cream and stir, bringing to boil, boil 2 minutes. Poke holes in cake and pour topping over. Serve warm or at room temperature.