

## **Washington State Public Health Association**

### **Resolution**

**Submittal: October 2008 Annual Meeting**

**Title: Encouraging Sustainable Food Practices in Healthcare to Improve and Protect Public Health**

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**WHEREAS**, industrial food production systems may contribute adversely to public welfare through harm to individuals,<sup>1,2,3,5,7,12,15, 19,20,21</sup> communities<sup>10,15</sup> and the environment<sup>15,19,20</sup>, and

**WHEREAS**, existing food systems contribute to the epidemic of obesity, diabetes, and other diet related chronic diseases, and as a result have immense direct and indirect economic and social consequences<sup>4,8</sup>, and

**WHEREAS**, the current food production system, in conjunction with the use of toxic chemicals associated with industrialized agriculture pesticide use, contributes to air, water and soil pollution,<sup>15,19,20</sup>; increases antibiotic resistance<sup>13,15</sup> and relies heavily on fossil fuels<sup>15</sup>, and

**WHEREAS**, Washington's healthcare food service departments can impact the health of their staff, patients, visitors by the provision of healthy foods in their institutions and the health of their communities at large by using their economic power to purchase food that is not only nutritious, but also environmentally sustainable, economically viable, and socially responsible, and,

**WHEREAS**, the American Medical Association has called for healthcare facilities to become "greener" by serving local and/or organic food, meat and poultry raised without non-therapeutic antibiotics, dairy without recombinant bovine growth hormone, and providing healthy snack choices<sup>6</sup>, and

**WHEREAS**, Washington has become a national leader in promoting local food through the passing of the Local Farms – Healthy Kids bill in 2008 which promotes Washington-grown food to improve the health of individuals, communities, and the environment<sup>16</sup> and the City of Seattle has made local food systems a priority by passing the Local Food Action Initiative in 2008<sup>18</sup> and,

**WHEREAS**, Washington healthcare institutions can impact current agricultural practices that compromise public health by promoting and providing education regarding sustainable food practices and healthier food throughout their communities; as modeled by eight Washington hospitals that have signed a pledge to procure sustainable food<sup>11</sup>; and,

**WHEREAS**, the WSPHA policies support efforts to reduce trans fats (Res. 07-06) eliminate toxic chemicals (Res. 06-04) and reduce obesity (Res. 05-03)<sup>22</sup>, and

**WHEREAS**, the American Public Health Association supports action towards developing a ‘Healthy, Sustainable Foods System’ (Policy Number 200712)<sup>23</sup>, therefore be it

**RESOLVED**, that the Washington State Public Health Association encourage Washington healthcare facilities to implement healthy, sustainable food practices into their institutions, including the procurement of meat and poultry produced in sustainable and humane feeding operations without non-therapeutic antibiotics; and the purchasing of locally produced foods as well as certified foods that assure environmental sustainability and social justice, and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the Washington State Public Health Association (WSPHA) encourage leadership from healthcare professionals to promote better health through sustainable food practices that encourage healthy eating, increase individual and community health, and support the environmental, economic, and social existence of Washington’s communities, and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the WSPHA support policy and legislative efforts to improve and protect public health through the development of sustainable agricultural practices and systems.

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22. [Washington State Public Health Association Resolutions:](#)  
**07-06 Addressing the Public Health Impacts of Trans Fats in the Food Supply**  
**06-04 Supporting Safer Chemicals Policies to Benefit Human and Environmental Health**  
**05-03 Washington State Public Health Association Declaring Obesity to be a Serious Threat to the Health and well-being of the Citizens of Washington State (Revised 2007)**
23. [American Public Health Association Policy Statement: Toward a Healthy, Sustainable Food System](#)  
**Policy Date:** 11/6/2007; **Policy Number:** 200712

**Organizations supporting similar policies:**

- American Public Health Association
- American Medical Association
- Health Care Without Harm
- Institute for Neurotoxicology and Neurological Development
- Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility
- Washington State Nurses Association
- Washington State Association of Occupational Health Nurses

**Individuals endorsing the resolution: Encouraging Sustainable Food Practices in Healthcare to Improve and Protect Public Health:**

- Laura J. Hart, MD -- President, Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility
- Richard Grady, MD
- Margaret Shield, PhD
- Sue Heffernan, MN, RN
- Karen Bowman, MN, RN, COHN-S -- Karen Bowman & Associates, Inc.
- Sara Cate, MD
- Katherine Davies M.A., D.Phil. Director, Center for Creative Change, Antioch University Seattle
- Elise Miller, M.Ed. – Executive Director, Institute for Children’s Environmental Health

**Submitting Author:**

Nancy Dickeman, MA  
 Environmental Health Advocate  
 Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility  
 1604 NE 50<sup>th</sup> Street; Seattle WA 98105  
[nancyd@wpsr.org](mailto:nancyd@wpsr.org)  
 206-354-2170

**Co-Author:**

Steven Gilbert, PhD, DABT  
 Executive Director  
 Institute for Neurotoxicology and Neurological Disorders  
 8232 – 14<sup>th</sup> Ave NE  
 Seattle WA 98115  
 206-527-0926  
[sgilbert@innd.org](mailto:sgilbert@innd.org)