



OCTOBER 24, 2011

GUIDE FOR COORDINATORS

www.FoodDay.org



Dear Food Day Leader,

We hope the following guide provides you with useful advice and tools for creating successful Food Day events in your community, whether you're organizing in your state, region, neighborhood, or at your institution.

Being a Food Day Coordinator is sure to be a rewarding experience; you will meet great people and have a real impact on the emerging food movement. Dedicated and talented people are needed at every level to make Food Day great. By determining at the outset how much energy and resources you realistically have to contribute, you will put yourself in the best possible position for achieving success. This guide will serve as a tool for that success but you will also have access to staff at Food Day's national office and other coordinators who will be able to provide additional advice or assistance. Don't hesitate to contact us at foodday@cspinet.org or 202-777-8392.

Much luck and thanks!

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OUR VISION

Food Day is a grassroots movement made up of individuals and organizations passionate about promoting a healthy, sustainable, and just food system. Food Day 2011 will culminate on October 24th with thousands of events across the country that encourage action and celebrate food. Together we will generate media coverage in every corner the country, send hundreds of thousands of signatures to Members of Congress supporting our national agenda, and most importantly, begin the millions of conversations that will lead to individual and systemic changes.

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CHECKLIST FOR A GREAT FOOD DAY

- ___ Develop a vision
- ___ Build a team
- ___ Define project
- ___ Set goals
- ___ Work out logistics
- ___ Broaden your team
- ___ Fundraise
- ___ Launch media campaign
- ___ Run a successful event
- ___ Follow-up

THIS YEAR'S NATIONAL FOOD DAY PRIORITIES ARE:

- 🍌 Reduce obesity and diet-related disease by promoting healthy foods
- 🍌 Support sustainable family farms and reform the subsidization of huge agribusiness
- 🍌 End food deserts by providing access to healthy and affordable food
- 🍌 Protect the environment and farm animals by reforming factory farms
- 🍌 Promote children's health by curbing junk-food marketing aimed at kids

You are most likely already knowledgeable in at least one of these policy areas in your state or community. While no one will expect you to be an expert on all the policy issues, it's important to have a basic understanding of the Food Day priorities and food subjects when talking with community members, the media, and elected representatives.

These talking points are a good place to start, and check www.FoodDay.org for more:

Health

- 🍌 The foods we enjoy should promote, not undermine, our good health. Several hundred thousand Americans die prematurely every year due to what we eat, with medical costs running well over \$100 billion.
- 🍌 Americans now spend well over \$30 billion a year just on drugs to treat heart disease and high blood pressure. Heart surgeries cost another \$25 billion. A healthy diet can lower blood pressure, cholesterol levels, blood sugar, and prevent everything from tooth decay and obesity to heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and cancer.

Sustainable Agriculture

- 🍌 Each year, the American budget provides \$16 billion in farm subsidies. Most of these benefits—74 percent—are realized by just 10 percent of farms, the largest farms.
- 🍌 Big agriculture also enjoys indirect subsidies, such as when America limits imports of cheap foreign sugar, keeping domestic sugar prices high and costs consumers several billion dollars a year.

Food Security

- 🍌 Some 50 million Americans are “food insecure,” or near hunger. It’s going to take political will, money, and time to ensure that every American has reasonable and affordable access to healthful, fresh, and culturally appropriate foods.
- 🍌 About 11 percent of the poorest Americans without cars live in “food deserts”—where people are beyond walking distance to the nearest grocery store. The term “food swamp” also describes some of these areas, if the community is filled with fast-food restaurants, convenience stores, or liquor stores, all of which sell junk foods, but precious little nourishing food.

Animal Welfare

- 🍌 Most of the meat, poultry, and dairy that Americans consume comes from factory farms, and at a real cost to human health, the environment, farm animals, and the quality of life in rural America. On these huge “confined animal feeding operations” (CAFOs), a single egg farm may house well over a million hens, and a large feedlot may contain up to 50,000 cattle.
- 🍌 Producing corn and soybeans for animal feed requires prodigious quantities of water, pesticides, fertilizer, energy, and land. On average, about one-third of a pound of fertilizer, 1,900 gallons of water, and seven pounds of grain are required to produce one pound of grain-fed beef.

Junk-Food Marketing to Kids

- 🍌 With junk foods and junk-food advertising everywhere, we should not be surprised that kids are gorging on inexpensive and often unhealthy foods. Tripling since 1980, the obesity rate is continuing to rise for boys and girls, be they white, black, or Latino.
- 🍌 Industry’s successful marketing efforts to kids, including television advertising, advergames, web sites, cartoon characters on packages, and even toys included with nutritionally poor fast-food meals, have cultivated a taste for white bread, fatty foods, and soft drinks. As a result, a typical child’s diet increases blood pressure, raises blood sugar levels, puts arteries on the road to heart disease, and promotes tooth decay.

For a broad introduction to these issues, start with the book, *Six Arguments for a Greener Diet* (<https://cspinet.org/EatingGreen/>). Check www.FoodDay.org for reviews of each issue area. And don’t forget to talk with the community organizers and local officials who are working on the crucial food issues in your area. Their experience and insights can be one of your most valuable resources.

The national priorities are designed to address overarching concerns within the food system and to find common ground for building the movement. We recognize that each community faces its own challenges and that the best solutions are informed by local culture, history, and resources. Because of this, developing state, local, or regional priorities is one of the most important tasks a coordinator or committee will undertake.

Food policy

Improve the perhaps-unwritten food policy for your city, state, company, or other large organization. Policies could include: get junk foods out of cafeterias and vending machines; show calorie contents of foods in cafeterias and vending machines; obtain more food from local farmers; organize CSAs and provide land for vegetable gardens for employees and residents; have classes to help prevent chronic diseases in residents and employees; introduce food safety restaurant grading to your community; have working water fountains in schools and public places; arrange for farmers markets in parking lots or plazas; mount community-wide campaigns to prevent childhood obesity.

PLANNING

“I plan, therefore I do.”

As a Food Day coordinator, one of your first goals/tasks should be to ask community leaders and organizations to attend the Food Day planning session. Of course, you can continue to invite people after this first meeting but try your best to get a large cross section of the ‘right’ people onboard initially.

Be sure to pick a location and set the time and date before you begin inviting folks; you will have better attendance with concrete information. Select your location and time/date to maximize turnout.

A planning session is instrumental to the success of your Food Day event(s) for many reasons:

- 👉 It serves as an icebreaker for those who may not know each other
- 👉 It creates a group ‘buy-in’ so everyone agrees on goals and activities
- 👉 It makes a potentially daunting task manageable—and most importantly, fun!

Thoughtful planning reduces overall workload! People are busy, and the folks likely to tackle Food Day are already involved in their community and have personal lives to boot (families, saving the world, dating, school, and puppies take time).

Goals for the first planning meeting:

- 👉 Introductions—to people and Food Day
- 👉 Review national priorities and discuss local priorities
- 👉 Discuss your Food Day goals
- 👉 Brainstorm what Food Day will look like in your community
- 👉 Discuss the size of the event: are several smaller events, one large event, or a hybrid appropriate?
- 👉 Discuss if you will have events only on October 24th, or drumbeat events leading up to the big day
- 👉 Develop committee structure
- 👉 Select regional coordinators if appropriate
- 👉 SET THE NEXT MEETING

When selecting local priorities:

- 👉 Identify food-related problems in your community
- 👉 Consider why the problems exist
- 👉 Identify immediate, short, and long-term goals -- immediate and short-term goals should set the stage for your long-term goal
- 👉 Ask how Food Day can realistically bring change
- 👉 Be strategic -- concentrate activities in politically important areas and use the press to reach a broader audience than just activists and attendees.

A few words on committees:

Many hands make light work. Break tasks into a realistic timeline and match the right people with the right tasks. You don’t have to use the committees outlined here but it is an example of the types of things that need to be taken care of.

Running effective meetings, delegating responsibilities, respecting group dynamics, and keeping it fun—and on-time—are the most important part of this process. Your first planning meeting should be open to as broad a group as feasible. After this session you will split into smaller committees in which the bulk of the work will be done.

The bulk of work should take place in committees. When setting meetings make sure they have enough time for a working session, or that they are meeting outside of the general meetings. Keep general meetings short and well-run. If you regularly get off agenda, make the appropriate adjustments. For instance, if someone keeps suggesting new activities when the full group is together, tactfully suggest that they join the appropriate committee – everyone will be thankful. Never underestimate the importance of providing healthful and tasty refreshments, if possible!

Be particularly conscious of who is working with the press, community leaders, and elected officials. These are all personality driven groups with long memories!

Possible Committee Structure

Steering Committee
Communication & Press
Fundraising
Grasstops Outreach
Student Engagement
Event Planning
Participant Outreach
Policy
Follow-Up

COALITION BUILDING

Food matters to a broad-spectrum of organizations: ranging from farmers and restaurateurs, to governments and public agencies, to schools and businesses. Including as many of the players as possible in the planning process has many advantages since there is strength in numbers.

Getting started:

- 👉 Make a list of every group in the community that is actively involved with food and food-related issues
- 👉 Identify appropriate contact persons, generally executive directors or press spokespeople
- 👉 Send an email or letter outlining Food Day nationally and your local angle. Be sure to include www.FoodDay.org in the message
- 👉 Within three days, follow-up with a call or in-person meeting
- 👉 Have something for them to do soon after your first contact: attend a planning session, write a letter, send a message to their membership, etc. It's much easier to maintain momentum rather than rebuild it!

This list should give you ideas of groups/people you could reach out to:

Food and Agriculture related organizations

- 👉 Food Policy Councils
- 👉 Community Food Project grant recipients
- 👉 Hunger relief groups like CARE, Oxfam, etc.
- 👉 Food banks and co-ops
- 👉 Sustainable agriculture advocates
- 👉 Farmers' organizations
- 👉 Agriculture extension agents
- 👉 CSAs (Community Supported Agriculture) programs
- 👉 Agriculture Extension Offices and Agencies

Reach out and touch someone: Earth and World Food Days

Food Day is modeled on Earth Day so it is a natural starting point for Food Day coalitions. For 30 years, Earth Day has inspired grassroots, community action and provided a public forum for the environment. Contact your area organizer for ideas and as a partner organization. After all, food production has a major impact on the natural environment.

World Food Day (WFD) is a natural partner for Food Day. Held on October 16th each year, WFD can serve as a launch point for Food Day. Invite WFD organizers to serve on your steering committee, and invite WFD participants to host or participate in Food Day events.

Colleges

- 👉 Student groups and faculty working on food issues
- 👉 Student governments
- 👉 College sustainability and gardening programs
- 👉 Campus PIRGs (Public Interest Research Groups)
- 👉 Real Food Challenge chapters
- 👉 Dining programs
- 👉 Campus ministers
- 👉 Nutrition and public health departments, medical schools

Local school systems

- 👉 Teachers and administrators
- 👉 Food service directors
- 👉 Physical education teachers
- 👉 Nurses
- 👉 PTAs
- 👉 School Boards

Health-related Organizations

- 👉 Local/state medical, dental, and dietetic associations
- 👉 Local chapters of the American Heart Association, American Diabetes Association, and the American Cancer Society
- 👉 Hospitals, clinics, and community health centers
- 👉 City and state departments of health

Other potential partners

- 👉 Neighborhood associations and block groups
- 👉 Community Action Organizations (CAOs)
- 👉 Churches, synagogues, and mosques
- 👉 AARP
- 👉 Consumer & environmental groups (PIRG and Sierra Club)
- 👉 Animal-welfare advocates (local Humane Society) and vegetarian organizations
- 👉 Local officials (mayor, city council members, legislators)
- 👉 City and state departments of consumer protection
- 👉 The Y, 4-H Clubs, Future Farmers of America
- 👉 League of Women Voters, American Association of University Women
- 👉 Restaurants and chefs
- 👉 Local unions

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Education and community engagement are integral to the success of Food Day. The best way to get the message out and to get people involved in the campaign for a more fair food system is with a great event. Also, events are fun to plan!

It's important to build your event(s) around your campaign: local issues and community culture should shape your planning. Be sure to: collect attendee information and have them take a concrete action on site. It's a cardinal sin to not have a sign-in sheet (or something like it) and not ask them to do something (send the national message to Congress, write a postcard to local leaders, etc).

Your coalition will identify its large-scale, public event(s): sponsoring food fairs, public hearings, and conferences on local and state food policy as well as workshops to train organizers. At the same time, coalition members and other community members also can create their own projects. One important role for the Food Day organizer is to keep track of these events and eventually report them back to the state coordinator or national office.

Events to celebrate Food Day:

- 👉 Organize an official dinner with leaders and activists at city hall with hundreds of simultaneous house/block parties
- 👉 Hold debates, workshops or conferences at a school, college or commercial center
- 👉 Screen films such as [Supersize Me](#) or [Pig Business](#) followed by a guided discussion
- 👉 Have a ‘junk food exchange’: give away good food in exchange for junk at subway stops, in parks, or in front of schools
- 👉 Organize cooking or gardening classes
- 👉 Expand (or introduce new) farmers markets
- 👉 Invite farmers to talk with restaurateurs and patrons
- 👉 Share a delicious, local, health meal with family and friends
- 👉 Arrange walking or cycling tours of sustainable farms
- 👉 Hold a harvest celebration – or incorporate Food Day into your community’s existing event
- 👉 Have a photo or artistic exhibition on food deserts or CAFOs, and invite the press, schools, and community leaders
- 👉 [Food and taste education](#) a la Slow Food International
- 👉 Bring congregation members together on World Food Day (October 16) and focus on food and justice through the following week’s national Food Day
- 👉 Organize a rally in a park with your mayor
- 👉 Incorporate Food Day message into an existing event

You can also engage in more long-term activities:

- 👉 Collect family recipes and self-publish a cookbook
- 👉 Improve school, hospital and college food
- 👉 Educate kids about food with the Food Day lesson plan
- 👉 Launch a campaign on your state’s food policy
- 👉 Request calorie labeling in school cafeterias and get rid of soda
- 👉 Promote food education, including cooking and gardening, in schools
- 👉 Plan a community garden and use free urban spaces to grow foods
- 👉 Join Meatless Monday or Fast-Food-Free Friday or other pledges

The Anatomy of a Great Event

- People came
- Media covered it
- Decision makers were influenced
- Contact information was collected
- Everyone had fun
- Things were learned
- Action was taken
- Stayed on message

Immutable Laws of Event Attendance

- Begin to publicize 8-10 weeks before the event
- Invite 4x the number of people you want to attend (goal of 100 = 400 invites)
- Contact confirmed attendees 3x:
 - Within 1 week of Yes
 - 7-4 days before hand
 - 24 hours before

Additional food for thought on event planning:

Not so obvious things to think about:

- Port-a-potties
- Permits
- Trash cans
- Security (for a large event)
- Music
- Greeters
- Sign-in sheets
- Clipboards
- Petitions
- Clean-up
- Tables
- Food and water
- Camera
- Live 'tweets'
- Great visuals
- Name tags

Tips for choosing speakers:

- Prize diversity (age, ethnicity, gender)
- Make sure important constituencies are represented
- Speakers should be recognizable, dynamic and/or unexpected (a student or patient)
- Stay on message, speakers should not distract from the Food Day message
- Emphasize brevity: It's hard to avoid ramblers completely but do your best to pick people who will stay on message and recognize cues to wrap-up

Food Day Lessons for Schools

A 5-day lesson plan was developed for you by Professor Isobel Contento and the faculty at the Center for Food and Environment at the Teachers College Columbia University. There are three versions of the lessons: for elementary, middle and high school.

Lesson 1: Eat Real

Lesson 2: Mostly Plants

Lesson 3: Not Too Much

Lesson 4: Navigate The Environment

Lesson 5: Be An Advocate

Use Food Day to educate kids about food and download the lessons from our website.

GET ON THE MAP!

Use FoodDay.org to promote and collect “RSVP”s to your event. A Google-maps-powered system lets people find Food Day events by typing in a ZIP code or browsing via the map. It’s an easy way to know how many people might be coming to your event.

Even if your event is full or closed to the public, putting your event on the map helps show how many Food Day events are happening across the country—and may give other organizers helpful ideas.

Simply select “host an event” from the PARTICIPATE menu at FoodDay.org. If your organization already has a Facebook page, you can also create an event page there.



EVENTS IN A BOX

NEED READY-MADE IDEAS? WE THOUGHT ABOUT SOME FOR YOU!

Junk Food Hall of Shame

Build a Junk Food Hall of Shame for display in the lobby of a school, health department, or community center. Show what foods are made of and how those things hurt our health: show the sugar content of 2 liters of soda pop; show the relative amounts of sugar, flour, food additives in Fruit Loops; show the fat and protein content of a hot dog; show what's lost when whole wheat flour is refined; etc.

Bring chefs and producers together

Want to promote local food systems and direct sale? Hold a dinner that brings together consumers, chefs and producers. The producers can present their products, while the chefs talk about how to best use them in the kitchen. All the production chain comes up together on stage.

- 👉 Select chefs or restaurants that use local products; it's easiest to hold the event at a restaurant
- 👉 Ask them to choose 2-3 producers
- 👉 Contact producers and ask them to be guest speakers during one event
- 👉 Ask the chef to build the menu around the products showcased that night
- 👉 Divide the evening into two parts, the first one will be an exhibition and sale of fruits, bread, etc. and then have producers talk about their products during the meal
- 👉 Meet the producer to know what product they will sell and what they want to discuss
- 👉 The chef will come out and explain how he or she uses the product in the kitchen
- 👉 You can even negotiate a deal and sell dinner tickets

Food Day Debates

It can be exciting to organize a series of debates on controversial food issues between well-known politicians, scientists, government officials, consumer representatives, and industry spokespeople. Some members of the national Food Day Advisory Board may be interested in participating in these debates.

- 👉 Find a sponsor (such as a media outlet, college, church, synagogue, or even a supermarket)
- 👉 Reserve an appropriate space (plan space around the number of expected attendees not the other way around)
- 👉 Get local TV and/or radio stations to broadcast the debates
- 👉 Give the media background information on the issues and debaters
- 👉 Publicize via email, listservs, fliers, Facebook, local organizations, etc.

Download more materials at: www.FoodDay.org

YOUR TIMELINE

The million dollar secret to successful events is... working backwards! As soon as you set a date for your event(s) make a timeline starting with that date and plot backwards assigning tasks as you go. Working backwards allows you to eliminate extraneous work.

6-7 months before Food Day:

- 👉 Build coalitions and committees
- 👉 Hold a kick-off planning session
- 👉 Decide on local priorities
- 👉 Decide on an event(s) and narrow down locations
- 👉 Brainstorm on actionable items (petitions, call-ins, direct action, etc)

5-6 months before Food Day:

- 👉 Finalize the checklist of what you need to do
- 👉 Continue outreach to organizations, especially those with members
- 👉 Create a budget if appropriate and decide on a fundraising strategy
- 👉 Register your event on www.FoodDay.org
- 👉 Learn more about the issues
- 👉 Send out news about Food Day to your listserv, mailing list, and website

4-5 months to Food Day:

- 👉 Pull together a press list or ask partners' for theirs
- 👉 Begin media outreach:
 - ask reporters/editors for a background meeting
 - write and pitch opinion-editorials
 - write and place letters-to-the-editor
- 👉 Revise your budget; be financially stable
- 👉 Start using social media #foodday
- 👉 Talk to other Food Day groups around the U.S.
- 👉 Send us your progress updates, we'd love to know and tell others
- 👉 Send out news about Food Day to your listserv, mailing list, website

3 -4 months before Food Day:

- 👉 Update the event info on the website
- 👉 Make a poster and an ad for your event
- 👉 Invite speakers, and let us know if our advisory board can help
- 👉 Continue placing letters-to-the-editor, begin calling in to radio shows, and request interviews for local TV shows
- 👉 Send out news about Food Day to your listserv, mailing list, website

2-3 months before Food Day

- 👉 Pick up the press pace
 - Place more letters-to-the-editor
 - Be more aggressive in getting interviews for local TV and radio
 - Try to get feature stories in papers and magazines (features are different than news stories, they are the human interest side of Food Day)

The dog days of summer:

There will be a natural lull in Food Day planning over the summer. Don't fret; use this time to get organized for fall when you will be in full event planning mode:

- Improve the design of your posters and materials
- Refine messaging
- Have at least 1 committee meeting
- Update mailing list
- Research lesser-known organizations you can reach out to in the Fall
- Focus on host and volunteer recruitment
- Brainstorm creative ideas to carry your message to community-decision makers

- 👉 Confirm event details
 - Locations
 - Hosts
 - Sponsors
 - Volunteers
- 👉 Begin turnout outreach:
 - Evites
 - Phone calls
 - Door knocking
- 👉 Update your listserv, mailing list, website

3 weeks before Food Day

- 👉 Finalize volunteers for event
- 👉 Asks attendees/hosts/speakers what else they need from you
- 👉 Hold a conference call of all hosts/coordinators if appropriate.
 - Try to find a guest speaker that will ‘rally the troops.’ Use the call to raise excitement and to disseminate information
- 👉 Update your listserv, mailing list, website

1 week to Food Day:

- 👉 One week reminder to attendees, hosts, volunteers

3 days to Food Day:

- 👉 Send media advisory and call important outlets
- 👉 Prepare press packets for your event (press release and background information)

Day before:

- 👉 Final event reminders to: volunteers, attendees, hosts, speakers
- 👉 Hold a thank you party for superstars and committee members

On Food Day:

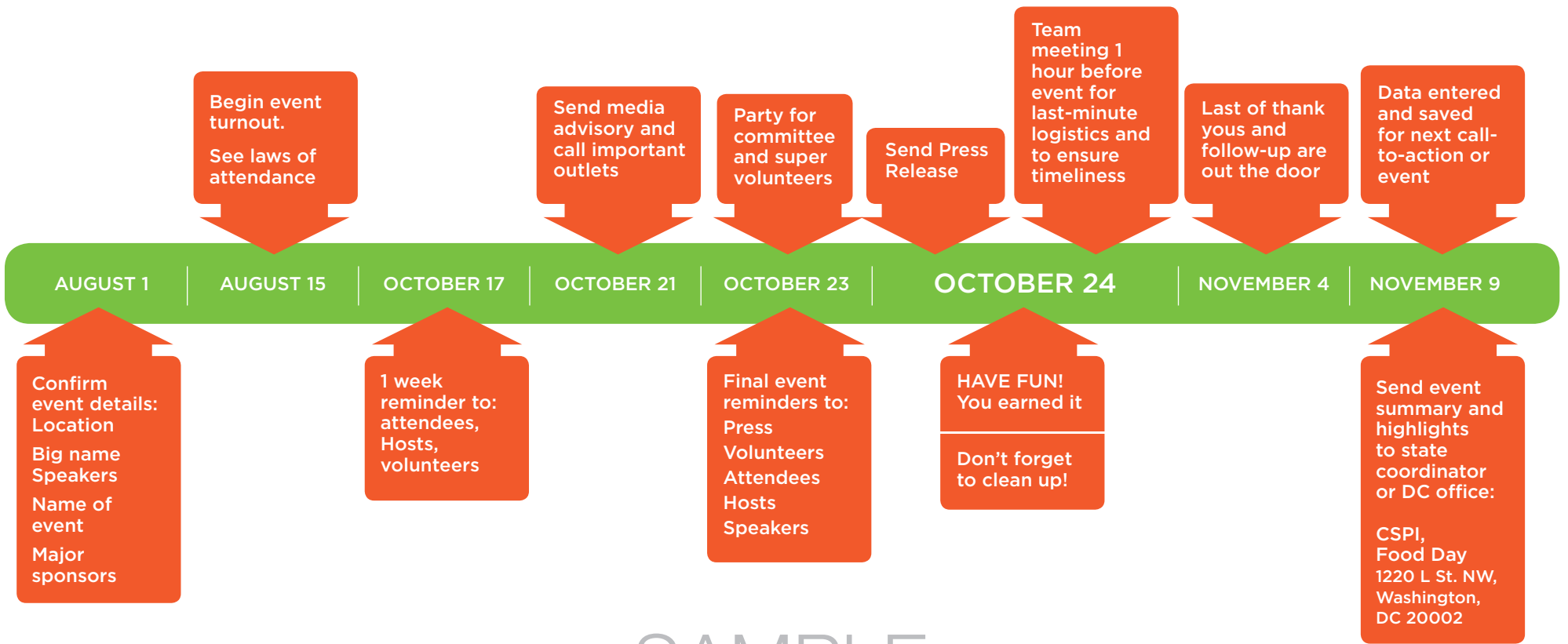
- 👉 Send the press release early in the morning
- 👉 Team meeting 1 hour before event for last-minute logistics and to ensure timeliness
- 👉 Make sure press members are taken care of and provided press packets
- 👉 Take pictures and ‘tweet’/update Facebook status
- 👉 Collect emails
- 👉 Have all event attendees take action
- 👉 HAVE FUN, you earned it

Post Food Day:

- 👉 By November 4th, record event and participant data
- 👉 By November 9th, report back to state coordinator or national Food Day event office
- 👉 Develop next steps...and plan for Food Day 2012

FOOD DAY TIMELINE

OCTOBER 24, 2011



SAMPLE

SAMPLE FOOD DAY PLAN

The sample Buffalo Food Day plan is an example of how a medium sized city could engage. That looks like a whole lot of work though, doesn't it? It's actually quite manageable if you start early, obviously if you get a late start scale back a bit (but not too much).

FOOD DAY 2011—BUFFALO, NEW YORK

DATE(S)	TIME	LOCATION	EVENT
Sat, 10/15, Sun, 10/16	All Day	City-Wide	Religious services and call-to-action
Mon, 10/17-Fri, 10/24	All Day	Buffalo, Williamsville, Amherst P.S., Nichols and Canisius	Food Day Curriculum and Urban Farm Project
Thurs, 10/20-Sun, 10/23	All Day	Elmwood Village and Allentown	FD menu insert and meal specials
Sat, 10/22	All Day	City-Wide	Religious services and call-to-action
	11am-3pm	Bidwell Farmers Market	Cook-off
Sun, 10/23	All Day	City-Wide	Religious services and call-to-action
	10am-3pm	City-Wide	Urban garden service project w/ Food Corps, WNA, and Garden Group
	11am-6pm	Delaware Park	Get Active Touch Football Tournament w/healthy vendors
Mon, 10/24	10am	Broadway Market	Food Desert Photo Display & BPS Field Trip
	11am	Broadway Market	Healthy Cooking Demonstration
	11:20am	Broadway Market	Press conference w/ the Mayor and School Board members
	All Day	UB, Buffalo State, D'youville	Teach-Ins, Debates and food system themed classes
	6pm	City Hall	Official City FD Dinner with local, sustainable, healthy food
	6pm	City-Wide	100 Dinners/Block Parties, timed with FD city dinner

MEDIA AND PUBLICITY

Great media coverage will generate buzz around food issues in your community and allow you to reach many more people to attend your events. Keep up with Food Day and other exciting things by ‘liking’ [Food Day on Facebook](#), or following [CSPI on Twitter](#) (use #FoodDay). Use our Facebook page to post about your events! There are additional media tools available online but use these 10 tips, adapted from the Earth Day organizer’s guide, as a starting point.

1. Develop Key Messages. Draft three to five key messages that tell a compelling story about your event, its purpose and your goals. Avoid the temptation to talk about too many things or get off message.

2. Identify a Spokesperson. First, select a member from your organization and/or community. The spokesperson will deliver key messages via media interviews, a press release quote, and in some cases, a public address.

3. Find a News Hook. Determine what makes your event interesting and newsworthy and use that angle as a selling point when communicating with the press.

4. Build a Media List. Compile a list of local media contacts from newspapers, blogs, radio stations, TV stations, etc. The list should include a reporter’s name, title, area of focus, phone number and e-mail. Remember to include the phone number and e-mail for the assignment desk at each outlet, including wire services such as, Associated Press and Reuters.

5. Prepare Materials. Draft a media advisory – a one-page document that outlines the logistics of your event (who, what, when, where and why) and your contact information. Next, prepare a press release – a one to two-page document providing more context about the event from your organization’s perspective. The release sets up a news angle for the media and should include quotes from the spokesperson.

6. Send Materials to Media. Distribute the media advisory one week before your event and send the press release the day before or the morning of the event. Send all materials before 9:00 am and be prepared to follow up with a phone call.

7. Pitch your Event. Follow up e-mail distribution of materials with a phone call to pitch your story. This allows you to offer an interview with a spokesperson, pitch a pre-event story and confirm attendance.

8. Run a Great Event. Ensure events take place according to schedule, particularly activities that have been highlighted for the media.

9. Greet the Media. Create a media area (room, tent or several tables). This area should include a quiet space for media interviews, media materials and a sign-in sheet, which will allow you to follow up with attendees later. Ensure spokespeople are easily accessible for interviews.

10. Follow up. Call reporters who attended your event to follow up on needs and confirm coverage. Track and record media placements to analyze the tone of coverage, and take notes of any lessons learned to apply for next time.

MAKING IT SUSTAINABLE

Making your event sustainable means making the best use of the available resources, people, spaces and money. You will be surprised how much you can get in in-kind professional support, food donations and free event space from schools, colleges or public buildings. So, partner up to get the most for your project, but take environmental sustainability into account. Use recycled or recyclable materials, tap water, reusable or biodegradable stuff. You may even set up a car share program for the meetings or events!

Financial sustainability

Enthusiasm and interest can drive a local Food Day coalition only so far. There is no magic formula for raising money, but two essential ingredients are planning and perseverance. The best way to start is by involving as many people in the planning of Food Day as possible. Many of these people will have connections with a variety of networks which may be able to contribute money, organize a benefit, or donate supplies, free space or equipment.

Look in your community for ideas and resources. A list to start with can include:

- 👉 clergy—they may offer space for your Food Day activities, help organize events, or make donations to your coalition from their church's community service funds
- 👉 unions (United Auto Workers, Service Employees International Union, American Federation of Teachers)
- 👉 consumer and environmental groups
- 👉 mayor's office and the city council,
- 👉 local educational institutions, school board, the PTA, or the school superintendent's office
- 👉 local restaurants and chefs, farmers, producers and farmers markets

The old stand-bys: Fundraising dances, vegetarian dinners, films, collections at local churches, collections at: farmers markets, grocery stores, and/or houses of worship can be useful ways to raise money. You could print your own Food Day program or newsletter and offer advertising space in it to local businesses.

AN IMPORTANT NOTE ON CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP

The Center for Science in the Public Interest never accepts funding from corporations or the government. This is one of the reasons that CSPI cannot offer financial assistance for your event. If your event requires more money than you think you can raise independently be sure the committee defines where that money can come from and talks before hand about how that money could influence the event or media coverage. There are many sustainable and just businesses that would make great partners but there are also partnerships that can corrupt your event or hijack press coverage. Also, be sensitive that constituencies within the coalition may not have the same attitude towards sponsors.