Exploring the True Costs of Food: A Workshop

April 23 and 24, 2012

The Pew Charitable Trusts
901E Street, NW, 2nd floor
Washington, DC 20004
Americas Room

Goals

- Discuss the environmental and public health effects and trade-offs of the practices that occur at all life cycle stages (e.g., production, processing, packaging, distribution, preparation, and consumption) for all foods in the U.S. food system
- Identify the types of information sources and methodologies required to recognize and estimate the costs and benefits of environmental and public health consequences associated with the U.S. food system
- Discuss potential issues and challenges to estimating/quantifying the hidden costs of the U.S. food system
- Consider the kind of research strategy and feasibility of conducting a full-scale accounting of the environmental and public health effects for all food products of the U.S. food system

Desired Outcomes

By the end of this workshop, we will have:

- A comprehensive list of the environmental and public health effects and trade-offs associated with conventional practices spanning the life cycle of animal-based food products (beef, poultry, pork, and dairy) in the U.S. food system
- A summary of the opportunities and challenges posed by developing a framework to account for the environmental, public health, and other costs of the various life cycle stages of all food products of the U.S. food system

DAY 1: April 23, 2012

8:00 a.m. Registration and Light Breakfast

8:30 Welcoming Remarks
Helen Jensen, Workshop Planning Committee Chair
Iowa State University

1Entrance to Pew Building is on 9th Street, NW between E and F Streets.
8:35  Sponsor Remarks
Anne Haddix, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Centers for Disease Control (CDC)

8:50  KEYNOTE
The Economics of Food Prices and Considerations for Valuing Food
Katherine (Kitty) Smith, American Farmland Trust

9:15  Q&A

**Session 1 – Understanding Measures and Strategies for Estimating the Costs of Food**

9:30  Life Cycle Assessment
Marty Heller, University of Michigan

10:00  Health Impact Assessment
Jonathan Fielding, Los Angeles County Department of Public Health

10:30  Break

10:45  Environmental Consequences
John Antle, Oregon State University

11:15  Public Health Consequences
James Hammitt, Harvard University

11:45  Discussion

12:15  Lunch

**Session 2 – Identifying External Effects**

1:15  Working Group Introductions
Helen Jensen

1:30  Working Groups (2 rotations: 1:30-3 / 3-4:30)
- Energy and GHG emissions
- Soil, water, and other environmental consequences
- Consequences of antimicrobial use in agriculture
- Other public health consequences
4:30  **Reflections and Reactions**
All Participants

- What are the possibilities or opportunities you see in an exercise to estimate the costs and benefits of the U.S. food system? Is it feasible? What is the next level of thinking from here?
- Do you think the matrix is a useful tool for developing a framework for this type of activity? How could it be improved?
- What needs immediate attention in order to do a full cost accounting?
- What challenges might you anticipate that will be faced by a future committee working on developing a framework to account for these costs?

5:00  **Adjourn**

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**DAY 2: April 24, 2012**

8:00 a.m.  **Registration and Light Breakfast**

8:30  **Welcoming Remarks**
Helen Jensen, Planning Committee Chair

8:45  **Reports from Working Groups**

9:45  **Panel on the Social and Ecological Dimensions of the Food Supply**
Ecological services: Scott Swinton, Michigan State U
Health inequalities: Steve Wing, U North Carolina
Accessibility to food: Ricardo Salvador, W.K. Kellogg Foundation
Animal welfare: Jayson Lusk, Oklahoma State U

**Session 3 - Quantification Methods**

11:00  **Lessons from Hidden Costs of Energy Report**
James Hammitt, Harvard University

11:30  **Valuing Agricultural Externalities and Public Health Impacts**
Anna Alberini, University of Maryland

12:00  **Concluding Thoughts & Discussion of Next Steps**
Helen Jensen

12:15  **Adjourn**