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TO: EDUCC
FROM: Shaad Rehman, Small and Minority Business Development Coordinator
THRU: Erik Bredfeldt, Director, Planning & Development Services
DATE: January 26, 2010
SUBJECT: Update on Local Food Systems at January 28, 2010 EDUCC Meeting

At its October 15, 2009, meeting, the City Commission heard a presentation from representatives of Florida Organic Growers (FOG) and the Citizen's Co-op. The presentation provided the Commission with an overview of the work of both these organizations in hunger abatement, promoting community gardens and encouraging residents to buy food locally. Following the presentation, both organizations invited the City of Gainesville to play an active role in furthering their efforts to ensure local food security and build the local food-based economy.

Concurrently, EDUCC has been looking for opportunities to strengthen the City's Economic Development Strategic Plan. As part of this process, EDUCC had indicated an interest in investigating how local food systems tie into the City's economic development framework. EDUCC had asked staff to reach out to the various stakeholders in the regional food economy.

As a result of this request, and as a followup to the October 15th meeting, staff has invited representatives from FOG and the Citizen's Co-op to the EDUCC meeting on January 28th to present an update on their work. Additionally, staff has invited representatives from Gainesville Farm Fresh, an organization that is working to develop a local, virtual food marketplace. The intent of these updates is to assess what the City can do to facilitate development of this facet of the regional economy.