



*SAFSF is a project of Community Partners*

## 2008 Year End Report Highlights of Key Activities

### Overview

During 2008, SAFSF was fortunate to feast on a bounty of riches: 'hot' and in the news issues, modest membership growth, a dedicated leadership team, volunteers ready and willing to step forward and an operating reserve. We could not be more grateful.

Our core work is to facilitate an open, creative and participatory network for funders around issues related to sustainable agriculture and food systems. We have been working to bring new voices into this dialogue and to expand our network. Our goal moving forward is to continue to provide our members and friends network with information and on-going opportunities that will enrich our collective knowledge base, and challenge us to be expansive and ever-creative in our thinking and actions.

We know the work of our members and their partners is having an impact on the field. We know our ranks are growing and we know our work is making a difference. And we also know there are huge challenges ahead of us all particularly in light of the economic climate in which we find ourselves.

Some important reminders from 2008:

- SAFSF plays an important role as a hub for information for funders and non-profit alike. *With that role comes responsibility for staff, leadership, and members.*
- Strong operational processes are critical to a growing organization. The time, money and energy invested up front save time in the long run.
- It is important to have a plan, to take it seriously, and to adhere to the plan. That said, having the ability and know-how to be able to deviate from the plan is essential.
- No matter the technology, nothing can replace face to face time.

### SAFSF Membership

SAFSF's network has grown slowly but steadily each and every year for the last six years. In 2008 we welcomed 8 new members. Our current 39 member organizations span the range from donor advised funds, to family, public, and corporate foundations, faith-based organizations to government agencies. SAFSF strives to maintain close working relationships both with members and non-members and desires to be of service to the larger philanthropic community in a meaningful way.

We know nearly all of our members have been significantly affected by the current financial crisis. We recognize this to be a time when we all need to work smarter, need to conserve time, energy and resources wisely, and we need to work in partnership now more than ever in order to do the work we want to see done. Please let our staff know how we can help you!

**Membership applications are accepted on a rolling basis throughout the year. Anyone interested in joining SAFSF should contact *Virginia Clarke* at [vclarke@safsf.org](mailto:vclarke@safsf.org).**

## 2008 SAFSF Members (\*\* new members in 2008)

Americana Foundation  
Aqua Fund  
Michael and JoAnne Bander Family Fund  
Ben & Jerry's Foundation  
The Bullitt Foundation  
*\*\*Castanea Foundation, Inc.*  
*\*\*The Carolyn Foundation*  
Cedar Tree Foundation  
Center for Ecoliteracy  
Columbia Foundation  
Compton Foundation, Inc.  
*\*\*Fair Food Foundation*  
Farm Aid  
Flintridge Foundation  
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation  
Clarence E. Heller Charitable Foundation  
W.K. Kellogg Foundation  
Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture  
*\*\* Liberty Prairie Foundation*

Lumpkin Family Foundation  
McKnight Foundation  
National Fish & Wildlife Foundation  
Jessie Smith Noyes Foundation  
*\*\* The Orfaea Fund*  
Organic Farming Research Foundation  
Oxfam America  
William Penn Foundation  
Presbyterian Hunger Program  
*\*\* Pugsley Fund of the HRK Foundation*  
*\*\*Quixote Foundation*  
Sandy River Charitable Foundation  
Solidago Foundation  
True North Foundation  
USDA- Risk Management Agency  
Lawson Valentine Foundation  
Wallace Center for Sustainable Agriculture  
William Zimmerman Foundation  
*\*\* Woodcock Foundation*

**Of Note:** *Sadly, SAFSF member organization Fair Food Foundation was forced to too-soon close their operations in December 2008 as a result of the shameful financial dealings of Bernard Madoff.*

### Steering Committee

This past year brought many new faces and talents to the SAFSF Steering Committee. We want to recognize the many years of service to SAFSF so graciously given by *Amy Solomon* of the Bullitt Foundation. Amy ended her tenure as of December 31, 2008. We are delighted to welcome new Steering Committee members: *Bill Buchanan*, USDA-Risk Management Agency; *Cecily Kihn*, Agua Fund, and *Gerry Wang*, William Penn Foundation.

Thanks to *Bruce Karmazin*, Lumpkin Family Foundation and *Bruce Hirsch*, Clarence E. Heller Charitable Foundation who held the reins as Co-Chairs in 2008 and will continue into 2009.

#### Current Steering Committee Members include:

*Bill Buchanan*, (USDA-Risk Management Agency)  
*Bruce Hirsch* (Clarence E. Heller Charitable Foundation)  
*Bruce Karmazin* (The Lumpkin Family Foundation)  
*Becca Golden* (Ben & Jerry's Foundation)  
*Greg Horner* (Cedar Tree Foundation)  
*Cecily Kihn*, (Agua Fund)  
*Ron Kroese* (McKnight Foundation)  
*Ricardo Salvador* (W. K. Kellogg Foundation)  
*Gerry Wang*, (William Penn Foundation)

## PROGRAMMING OVERVIEW

During the course of the 12 months, we have seen a marked increase in requests for information, resources, presentations, and connections by and to funders and non-profit organizations alike. Our 2008 calendar was very full and quite varied: We hosted or co-hosted a total of eleven conference calls covering a wide range of topics, we hosted or co-hosted a series of in-person events around the country – from Denver to Portland to San Francisco to New York. The success of our programmatic efforts has encouraged many to step forward and get involved whether that be serving on the Forum planning committee or the Steering Committee, organizing a conference call or providing information for the listserv. We hope this trend continues.

## CONNECTING THE DOTS – LINKING THE NETWORK TO MORE OF ITSELF

SAFSF staff worked individually with numerous grantmakers to help them develop or strengthen their grantmaking in the field, including funders new to the field, those preparing materials for their boards, or looking for partners. Some happy 'customers' speak for themselves:

- *"can't thank you enough for this. My discussions [have been] very productive and this list will yield a great deal of learning, no doubt. Your expansiveness on this is greatly appreciated."*
- *"Thank you for putting him in touch with me; we will be having a phone conversation in the New Year. I am REALLY wanting to have a conversation with other folks who are interested in capitalizing the purchase of farms, and I don't know where such people are!"*
- *"we had a FABULOUS meeting; ...I think I hit pay dirt, thanks to you. Many of our areas of interest overlapped.... She got excited and is going to see how the idea might be moved forward. So, as my son would say, 'It was a gold star day.'"*
- *"... This has been a great opportunity to reach out to potential funder allies. I can't thank you enough for helping me pursue this."*
- *"thought you'd like to hear about the immediate impacts of the connections you are helping me make....he called me today and we talked for about a half hour before he invited me to lunch next week to talk some more. Seems to me, we were meant to meet in that session at APHA. I had to give a more general talk on Tuesday to a national tribal forum here and many tribes were really interested in the brownfields and public health connection to garden and healthy food."*

## SAFSF's MAIN COURSE OFFERINGS

**6<sup>th</sup> Annual Forum:** Our 4-day 2008 Forum was held in Portland, Oregon and included 2 full days of site visits, 4 plenaries; funder sponsored workshops, an afternoon of mobile workshops, dine arounds, and more. We had our largest attendee audience to date, including 10 new funders, and received very favorable feedback which highlighted the immediate impact such a learning environment can have on the work:

*It was one of the best conferences I've attended. Many new contacts for me; new ideas; new lessons. And, of course, great food and the best site sessions to go with the outstanding company. I returned to a board meeting, June 30<sup>th</sup>, when I presented a cluster of grants related to SAFS. My immersion in all things SAFS in Portland couldn't have been better timed. I presented the proposed grants still fresh from all the new "intelligence" gathered from the conference. By providing this larger context (instead of focusing on the grants), it caused a bit of a stir... one board member asked if we could make this a foundation-wide initiative; another wanted a board retreat focused on SAFS. The best outcome is that my colleagues across program areas seem to be converts. It's only the beginning but I'm hopeful that the stage has been set for a much bolder agenda.*

**Survey Report: Trends in Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems Funding, 2003-2006** Done in collaboration with Headwaters Group, this report updated SAFSF's previous funding survey of the years 1988-2002. The goal with these surveys is to learn which foundations are funding what, where, under what strategies, to identify where gaps exist, and to note trends. It is our desire to be able to update this trends survey on an every 3-4 year basis.

**Listserv:** The number of SAFSF listserv subscribers grew by nearly 20% in 2008 and continues to garner favorable reviews. We encourage subscribers to make better use of the list and the expertise within the network by posting information and queries directly to the list at [safsf@lists.safsf.org](mailto:safsf@lists.safsf.org)

**Website:** We have expanded the resource section of the website and updated materials from our previous Forums and other gatherings.

### **OLD STANDARDS/NEW STEPS – DANCING WITH OUR FRIENDS**

SAFSF has been fortunate to collaborate with affinity group colleagues in our efforts to highlight the relationship between food and agriculture to a whole host of interconnected and related issues. Some of the year's highlights included:

- **January:** *Power in Partnerships to Tackle Disparities: Diversity is our Asset and Equity our Common Ground*, a workshop held at Grantmakers in Health, co-sponsored with colleagues from Health and Environment Funders' Network and the Funders' Network on Smart Growth and Livable Communities.
- **March:** 6<sup>th</sup> Annual *'Eat Here!* local foods dinner at The Funders' Network on Smart Growth and Livable Communities conference in Denver. We have learned that this is much more than *just* a meal, it has impact long after the last morsel has been enjoyed.
  - Impact: "Always the best part of the conference! ....This has already influenced our grantmaking with a large grant to our farmers market."
  - "It makes me want to do it at home – makes me know that it is doable."
- **September:** *The Role of Funders in Preparing for and Responding to ICE Raids*, a call co-sponsored with Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees (GCIR)
  - Impact: One funder launched a new study group for a regional philanthropic community specifically around immigration/refugees and the link to food systems.
- **November:** *Be Careful What you Wish For! BANG! (Bits, Atoms, Neurons and Genes)*. A funder briefing on emerging technologies in collaboration with Grantmakers without Borders, Funders' Network on Trade and Globalization, Environmental Grantmakers Association, and The Funders Workgroup for Sustainable Production and Consumption
  - Comment: "this is a cutting edge issue with huge positive and negative implications that funders need to get on their radar screen...."

### **2008 Conference Call Annual Log**

#### **January:**

- *In the Kitchen (members only)* – a conversation with Ricardo Salvador, W. K. Kellogg Foundation

#### **March:**

- *Funder update with results from Fall 2007 survey of funding in sustainable agriculture and the food system*
- *Synthetic Biology and Post-Modern Agriculture: How Extreme Genetic Engineering is Transforming the Agricultural Economy*

**April:**

- *In the Kitchen (members only)* – a conversation with Roy Steiner, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
- *Accelerating Networked Action: Thinking About and Funding Groups Allied for Change*

**June**

- *Evolving Standards for "Organic" and "Sustainable Agriculture": Where Compatibility Ends and Tension Begins*

**September**

- *The Role of Funders in Preparing for and Responding to ICE Raids*. SAFSF co-sponsored call with Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees
- *Green Chemistry Scoping Call* (co-hosted with HEFN)
- *In The Kitchen* (members only)

**October:**

- *Seeds for the Future*

**December:**

- *In The Kitchen* (Members only) – a conversation with Bob Lang, CEO/President, L3C Advisors L3C

**THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME - COMMUNITY PARTNERS**

SAFSF just celebrated our 3<sup>rd</sup> anniversary as a project of our fiscal sponsor Community Partners. We have comfortably settled into a strong, steady and respectful working and learning relationship. SAFSF has taken a leadership role in bringing together various Community Partners' projects whose work centers on issues related to food systems work in the Los Angeles/Southern California region as well as nationally. This group includes *The City Project*, *Root Down*, *LA Health Action*, *Legacy LA*, *South Los Angeles Community Kitchen* and the *Farmer Veteran Coalition*. We anticipate ongoing conversations linking the national network with local and regional work going on.

An invitation: Should you find yourself in need of meeting space in Los Angeles do consider using Community Partners' wonderful facilities at the main 'campus' of the California Endowment in downtown LA. [www.communitypartners.org](http://www.communitypartners.org)

**SAFSF FINANCES**

SAFSF operates on a July 1 – June 30<sup>th</sup> fiscal year. FY08 (June 30, 2008) ended with a healthy balance of \$125,759, which includes a 6-month operating reserve. For FY09 (begun July 1, 2008) renewals and new memberships have remained steady in spite of the economic downturn. This has us on track, as of December 31, 2008 – our mid-way point for FY09 - to meet our projected revenues. And, like all organizations, we are very carefully monitoring our income and expenses given that we cannot foresee to what extent actual or projected losses incurred by members may affect us in the coming months.

## **Here is a sample of what's coming up. - JOIN US IN 2009!**

In the Kitchen – Member only conversations: Our quarterly, member-only conversations will begin in February. Stay tuned for further details!

2009 Conference Calls - Our calls are starting up fast and furious!

January 14: *Brownfields and Urban Agriculture*, co-sponsored with The Funders' Network

January 21: Webinar: *Climate Change and Cattle*, co-sponsored with EGA, Animal Grantmakers

February 5: *Regional Funder Collaborations*

### **Events:**

March 17: The 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Eat Here! Local Foods Dinner/Reception at The Funders' Network 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference, Miami, Florida

## ***DEEP ROOTS***

### ***SAFSF's 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Forum – Greensboro, North Carolina***

***June 23-26, 2009***

*Put these dates on your calendar now!*

*A preliminary program and registration will be available online in March.*

#### Overview:

The South is well known for its agriculture and its food. Both are deeply rooted in geography and culture and share a rich and complicated history. Greens and BBQ, shrimp, grits and pecan pie are intertwined with tobacco and slavery, poverty, and discrimination. Yet, like all of the regions SAFSF has visited in past years, the Southeast is far more than its stereotypes – historical and present day. The region is, in fact, awash in amazingly good and creative works, highly skilled individuals and passionate artists who work the land and the food.

We hope you will join us in Greensboro for our 4-day gathering which has been designed to expose us all to a broad range of experiences and people. We trust that your time in North Carolina will help expand our collective knowledge base - both intellectual and visceral. Site visits, plenaries and other activities will, we hope, offer a vista onto some aspects of the reality of today's South. We expect some of what you will experience you will find glorious; some of it will be shocking. All of it is important.

The Planning Committee wants our 2009 Forum to be more than just a few great, interesting, but in the end - isolated conversations. We don't know what 'that' might look like. But we do know that the only way we'll come close is to have you there, along with your voice, and your experience. It doesn't matter if you are new to the issues or have been funding in this realm for many years: we need your perspective and take on things, to learn about your work, hear your questions, your reflections on the paths already taken and the road still ahead.