

**Common Health August 15, 2007  
Promotion (Recorded July 29, 2007)**

## **Hungry Planet**

Calling all listeners. We need you to join our dialogue on health in Maine.

This is Jim Fisher of the Hancock County Planning Commission and host of Common Health.

How do we feed a hungry planet? Hunger and malnutrition affect more than one-third of the world's population, more than 2 billion people, including people in Maine. Our shift in Maine to importing highly processed foods loaded with fat, salt and refined sweeteners has fueled higher rates of obesity, diabetes and heart disease. Maine farmers are fighting our dietary spiral by producing high quality organic produce, but at a price that many consider beyond their reach. Join our dialogue about hunger, whole foods and health on Wednesday, August 15.

Learn more by visiting [commonhealth.org](http://commonhealth.org) where you will find information, links to community resources, audio archives and more.

Common Health airs the third Wednesday of every month from 10 to 11 in the morning.

Join us for Common Health, only on WERU, your community radio station, 89.9 FM, Blue Hill, 102.9, Bangor and live on the web at [weru.org](http://weru.org).

**Common Health August 15, 2007**  
**Introduction**

## **Fitness Part II: You are what you eat**

Calling all listeners. We need you to join our dialogue on health in Maine.

This is Jim Fisher of the Hancock County Planning Commission and host of Common Health.

How do we feed a hungry planet? Hunger and malnutrition affect more than one-third of the world's population, more than 2 billion people, including people in Maine. Our shift in Maine to importing highly processed foods loaded with fat, salt and refined sweeteners has fueled higher rates of obesity, diabetes and heart disease. Maine farmers are fighting our dietary spiral by producing high quality organic produce, but at a price that many consider beyond their reach.

Join us as we discuss hunger, industrial agriculture and locally grown food.

Your job is to call in and join our dialogue to make Maine a healthier place to live.

Call us at any time at (207) 469-0500 or toll free at (866) 625-9378

Common Health Radio WERU 89.9 / 102.9 FM

Call-in Phone Numbers (207) 469-0500 or (866) 625-9378

**Time:** Wednesday, August 15, 2007 10:00 -11:00 AM

**Host:** Jim Fisher, Hancock County Planning Commission

**Guests:**

- ◆ Bob St. Peter, Independent Food Project and Good Life Center Steward  
([www.goodlife.org](http://www.goodlife.org))
- ◆ Dr. John Cook, Hunger Expert

**Program Outline**

Jim introduces common health program mission and today's topic and guests.

*As August gardens hit full production in Maine and successful gardeners look for creative ways to unload zucchinis, the news suggests that much of the world and many of our neighbors are experiencing difficult times.*

*I am happy to welcome two guests today who have been working on the complex issues of sustaining food systems in the midst of enormous challenges.*

**Dr. John Cook is ...**

**Bob St. Peter directs the** Independent Food Project and Good Life Center

*Tell us a little about yourself and how you came to be involved in efforts to understand how food production and distribution are affection our collective well-being.*

*John, How did hunger become a focus for you?*

*Peter, how did you get started on the issue of food security and sustainable agriculture?*

*How do you and your organization address the issues of food security and hunger?*

**First call for participation:** (207) 469-0500 or (866) 625-9378

We particularly hope that you will call if you have a personal relationship with food.

We could head in two different directions on this program. One direction is to look mostly at production, or creating a sustainable and healthy agricultural system. The other direction is to look at distribution, or creating a system that assures everyone has enough to eat, and hopefully enough healthy food. I think the two are connected, but some solutions may only address half the problem.

Does it make sense to talk about production and distribution separately?

Let's start with local food production and work our way out.

*Does Maine grow much of the food that we eat now?*

*Could we grow more?*

*What could we grow?*

*Are there qualitative differences in locally grown food from food that we import?*

Expanding our horizon, what about the northeastern states.

*How self-sufficient are we at this level?*

*Are we still losing agricultural land to development?*

◆ *Impacts of sprawl on farming (land prices, neighbor complaints, marketing)*

At the national level, the US and Canada have a history of exporting food worldwide.

Recent problems with tainted Chinese wheat gluten caught many of us by surprise.

We export wheat world wide, even to China.

Processed food products, including pet foods, are made up of some very basic building blocks, like gluten, casein and corn sweetener.

*How does this new model for food processing affect local agriculture?*

*Will recent scares with propylene glycol in toothpaste, tainted wheat gluten and e-coli bacteria in spinach lead to greater consumer caution?*

*Will tighter food safety standards result?*

*Some standards make it more difficult to get locally grown food. What can we do to keep local markets open while protecting the food supply?*

One more factor that is getting tremendous attention in the press is global climate change. Western states, and many developing countries, are facing a water crisis that will almost certainly cripple future production. Phoenix Arizona has experienced 20 days this summer with temperatures about 110 degrees.

*Will the relatively cool northeast be able to make up for production losses in the west and south?*

**Second call for participation:** (207) 469-0500 or (866) 625-9378

On to Food distribution:

John, you are dealing with a specific problem connected with getting food to people who need it.

*What are some root causes of hunger and chronic or regular food shortages?*

*Is this problem widespread? How the northeast doing relative to the rest of the country?*

*How are these shortages addressed?*

*Is the quality of food that people eat also a concern?*

*Has diet always been a problem for people who are poor?  
How do you balance cost and quality? Is there a trade-off?  
What are the impacts of the gastro-industrial complex on American diets?*

**Third call for participation:** (207) 469-0500 or (866) 625-9378

*What can we do to build communities that are healthier – that promote healthier food?*

- ◆ *How do we encourage more locally grown food?*
- ◆ *What land use policies will be needed?*
- ◆ *Is there any way to compete on price?*
- ◆ *Is there a role for the media?*
- ◆ *Influencing parents*

A new concept has gained currency called “Food Security.” In Hancock County the local Healthy Maine Partnerships are working with food pantries, shelters, retailers and local organizations to assure that people need not go hungry or malnourished.

*Peter, I think that you are involved in this effort. Can you fill us in on any details?*

*John, have you worked with similar programs for many years. Are them pretty much like this effort or are that other creative approaches from which we can learn?*

*What are some of the challenges to creating food security systems?*

*Is social stigma an issue?*

*Is it difficult to provide the right food?*

*What is the right food?*

*Is there any prospect for connection local farmers and food processors to this effort?*

**Fourth call for participation:** (207) 469-0500 or (866) 625-9378

Lets sum up our discussion by turning back to the question of health, hunger and the gastro-industrial complex.

*What are some health consequences of the modern American diet?*

*What needs to happen to improve the diets of people who are poor?*

*How can we balance our need for good food with long winters?*

- ◆ *Storage: Canning, freezing, drying,*
- ◆ *Extending seasons: greenhouses*
- ◆ *Importing – from where?*

**Final Comments from Guests. THANKS!**

## **Wrap-up for Common Health**

We've come to the end of our program for this month. Be sure and visit our website, [commonhealth.org](http://commonhealth.org) where you'll find helpful background on a variety of public health topics, including audio archives and a place for you to contribute questions for our future shows.

Common Health theme music is PICABA performed by Eric Horschak.

Thanks to our guests Bob St. Peter and John Cook. Thanks to Amy Browne for engineering and to our underwriters and members for supporting all of our public affairs and news programs.

Common Health airs on the third Wednesday of the month from 10 to 11, with support from the Hancock County Planning Commission, the University of Maine Cooperative Extension and the Hancock County Coalition for Community Health.

Join us on September 19th for a dialogue about the health of our pets, farm animals and wildlife. Recent scares including avian influenza, rabies, honey bee losses and pet poisonings have shown how much we value other animals and how many challenges we have for protecting their health, and ours.

Thanks for listening and for your suggestions for future programs. Email us at [commonhealth@weru.org](mailto:commonhealth@weru.org) Stay tuned for On the Wing with your host \_\_\_.

This is Jim Fisher, wishing you good health.

## Information for guests of Common Health on WERU

WERU Community Radio (89.9 FM in Blue Hill and 102.9 FM in Bangor) is airing a new monthly call-in radio program to expand community dialogue about public health in Maine. Over the coming months, **Common Health** will feature the voices of public health officials, citizens, and policy makers as we try to understand how we attend to public health in Maine and how could we do it better. Broadcast on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month from 10 to 11 AM, the program will examine the current public health system in Maine and choices before policy makers and citizens, as Maine tries to improve the health of her citizens.

Common Health Radio Programs will be complemented and augmented by a series of news reports produced by Jim Campbell, and airing as part of WERU's news schedule. WERU has enhanced its web page with audio archives of Common Health and written background, at [www.commonhealth.org](http://www.commonhealth.org)

***Guests: Try to arrive at the studio in East Orland at 9:30 a.m. on the day of the scheduled program***, which will give time to go over the mechanics of the program, to talk about how the conversation will begin and for everyone to calm any "pre-broadcast jitters". The programs air live from 10-11 a.m.

During the program, we will be encouraging listeners to phone the station with their reactions, comments and questions. If you know of any area citizens for whom this topic is of interest, you might encourage them to listen, and call in. You will have a chance to respond to callers and hosts will keep the whole "conversation" moving with questions and comments. Hosts work off a rough outline, with opportunities to follow up on points raised in your conversation and in phone calls from listeners.

***For your information, WERU is at 89.9 FM for mid coastal Maine (and 102.9 FM in the greater Bangor area), and the studio phone number for call-ins is 469-0500.*** You might encourage a friend or colleague to tape the program off the air; I try to have a recording made but with live radio it is always good to have a back-up plan.

***The studios of WERU*** are on Route 1 in East Orland, 13 miles from Ellsworth and 6 miles from Bucksport, located on the north side of the road, across from Whispering Pines Campground on Toddy Pond. WERU listeners are found from Jonesport to Waldoboro, along the coast, and inland to Bangor, Waterville and points in between!

***Common Health Staff and Collaborators:*** Ron Beard of University of Maine Cooperative Extension and long-time host of Talk of the Towns and Family Radio Forum on WERU will serve as producer and primary host of Common Health radio programs. Jim Fisher, of the Hancock County Planning Commission, is assisting with project evaluation and reporting. Jim Campbell, former host of Morning Maine and producer of Notes from the Electronic Cottage, serves as overall project coordinator and is producing short news features. Matt Murphy, General Manager of WERU, serves as liaison between the project and WERU staff, board and volunteers, while Sammy Regal-Burbank is serving as project staff assistant.

***For more information:*** If you have any questions, feel free to give Jim Fisher a call at 667-7131 or email him – [jfisher@hpcme.org](mailto:jfisher@hpcme.org).