



Historical Timeline October 2014

<p>2005</p>	<p>Grow Montana forms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding sources: Kellogg Foundation; Mary Stranahan/High Stakes • The coalition is housed at NCAT and coordinated by Nancy Matheson <p>2005 Legislative Priorities:</p> <p><u>Licensing and inspection of mobile meat processors (HB 484) (successful)</u> (Llew Jones, R-Conrad) Led the winning legislative campaign to authorize the Montana Department of Livestock to inspect mobile meat slaughter units. By harvesting animals on-farm in an inspected mobile unit, farmers and ranchers can sell meat at any Montana retail, restaurant, or direct market.</p> <p><u>Establish bid preference for food produced in Montana (HB 521) (unsuccessful)</u> (Kevin Furey, D-Milltown) Initiated a bill to make it easier for Montana's public institutions to purchase Montana-produced food by adding a 10% preference for in-state producers. Though the bill ultimately died in the House Appropriations Committee, several other winning committee and floor votes showed broad support for helping Montana's food producers enter Montana's public food service markets.</p>
<p>2006</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grow Montana helps pilot first year of FoodCorps VISTA volunteers to focus on farm to institution work spearheaded by grad student Crissie McMullan and UM EVST faculty member Neva Hassanein. Members placed on four college campuses: Salish Kootenai College, Montana State University, University of Montana-Missoula, and University of Montana-Western. Funding for pilot provided by Kat Taylor, a philanthropist from Washington state. • Grow Montana receives USDA Growth Through Agriculture grant to conduct study to look at opportunities in institutional food market. • Grow Montana publishes report based on market study “Unlocking the Food Buying Potential of Montana’s Public Institutions”
<p>2007</p>	<p>2007 Legislative priorities</p> <p><u>Resolution urging US to allow interstate shipping of MT processed/inspected meat (HJ 17) (successful)</u> <i>Encourages more meat processing in Montana by removing the federal ban on interstate commerce of state-inspected meat. This state resolution urges Congress to act.</i></p> <p><u>Resolution for interim study on value-added agriculture (SJ13) (successful)</u> <i>Creates an interim study committee to research and propose solutions for value-added food processing in Montana. UM committed to assisting with this study.</i></p> <p><u>Montana-produced foods to state institutions/optional procurement exception (SB 328) (successful)</u></p>

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<p>2007</p>	<p><i>Allows public institutions more flexibility to buy Montana-grown OR processed food through a voluntary exemption in the Montana Procurement Act. The exemption allowed local purchases that were not the lowest bid, but purchases still needed to stay within budget. (NOTE: Now that more food processing is happening this may be something GM should revisit.)</i></p> <p>Grow Montana also strongly supported our allies on the following bills in 2007:</p> <p><u>Regional rural value-added agricultural program; appropriations for regional centers</u> (HB 223) (unsuccessful) Developed and led by Montana Economic Developers Association <i>Funds six Montana Agriculture Innovation Centers to provide technical assistance and capital availability to food and agriculture entrepreneurs.</i></p> <p><u>Revise economic development programs</u> (SB 42) and <u>Increase appropriations to certain economic development programs</u> (HB 331) (unsuccessful) Developed and led by Montana Economic Developers Association <i>Retains Montana’s important agricultural development programs (such as Growth through Agriculture) currently scheduled to expire in 2010 by removing their “sunset clause.”</i></p> <p><u>Improving access to healthy school meals</u> (HB 479) (unsuccessful) Developed and led by Montana Dietetic Association and Montana Food Bank Network <i>Provides \$250,000 for small grants to school food services to purchase equipment needed to serve more nutritious food, e.g., salad bars, to implement schools' new wellness policies.</i></p> <p><u>Urge farm bill priorities</u> (HJ 23) (unsuccessful) Developed and led by Montana Farmers Union <i>Resolution encouraging family farm principles in 2007 federal farm bill, an attempt to win state support to influence federal policy</i></p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last year of Kellogg Grant • Grow Montana convenes a luncheon with representatives from several organizations to discuss who was supporting and presenting which bills and who they could count on for support. Set the stage for the Governor’s Food and Ag Summit • Grow Montana assists in the production of a video called “History of Montana’s Food System,” for presentation at the Governor’s Food and Ag Summit • Governor convenes Food and Ag Summit, Grow Montana is a prominent member of the summit’s planning committee • Governor initiates Montana Food System Task Force, later to become MT Food Systems Council, an all volunteer council comprising members from all over the state; based on unique model developed by Governor Schweitzer who required the heads of all relevant agencies to sign an MOU that they would provide support to the council’s efforts; fell apart after about three years when funding ran out and the council lost its coordinator

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2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grow Montana decides to remain autonomous from MT Food Systems Council
2007-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jessica Babcock, UM grad student, conducts thesis on Food Innovation Centers with support from Grow Montana who presented the research idea to UM EVST faculty
2008-9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on Babcock's work, Grow Montana publishes Montana Food System Video about re-building food processing infrastructure that led to a bill to create Food and Ag Development Centers in Montana
2009	<p><u>2009 Legislative Priority:</u> Fund food and agriculture innovation centers (HB 583) (successful) A bill to support Montana's Food and Agricultural Development Centers (bill that created the centers)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing change: Nancy Matheson leaves for MT Department of Agriculture to manage Food and Ag Development Centers, NCAT hires Crissie McMullan as Grow Montana project director (also FoodCorps Coordinator at the time). Grow Montana moves from 1.5 full-time staff to 1 full-time staff.
2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crissie McMullan steps back from role with GM to focus on FoodCorps and other NCAT Projects; Grow Montana moves from NCAT to AERO. Grow Montana moves to half-time staff, funding provided by High Stakes Foundation.
2011	<p><u>2011 Legislative Priorities:</u></p> <p><u>Supporting, Encouraging, and Promoting Montana Farm to School Programs (SJ 19) (unsuccessful)</u> (sponsored by Sen. Caferro and 12 other members of congress) Encouraged Montanans to recognize the first week of October as "<i>Montana Farm to School Week</i>", and to recognized Farm to School as programs that both purchase agricultural products from local farmers and educate students about healthy food choices and why local agriculture is valuable. <i>Unfortunately, due to a missed deadline in the legislative process this resolution died.</i></p> <p><u>Generally revise use of accounts and funds - Food and Ag Dev. Centers (HB 611) (successful)</u> Sponsored by Rep. Cook. In Montana's 2009 Legislative Session, Grow Montana led the effort to establish the Food and Agriculture Development Center network. The first bill to financially support the centers (Provide support for network of Montana Food and Agricultural Development Centers (HB 207) sponsored by Rep. MacDonald) died in committee, but HB 611 (sponsored by Rep. Cook) was amended in the last days of the session to include reduced, but still manageable funding levels for the centers: half of the funding is permanent, half has to be sought every session. This ensures</p>

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2011	they will continue to fill a critical role in establishing the entrepreneurial support system necessary to actually build the food production, processing, and distribution infrastructure needed to localize Montana's food system.
2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blue Cross Blue Shield (now Foundation for Healthy Montanans) awards grant to NCAT, includes Grow Montana funding. • Grow Montana moves back to NCAT from AERO; NCAT hires full time coordinator, Stephanie Potts in December (Grow Montana moves back up to 1 FTE staff)
2013	<p><u>2013 Legislative Priorities</u></p> <p>Provide farm to school grant program (HB 471) (unsuccessful) (sponsored by Hertz, R-Polson) Grow Montana spearheaded HB 471, the Farm to School Bill, to help public schools buy Montana-made foods for their lunches via a grant program administered by Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI). The Farm to School Bill made it through its first House vote with bipartisan supermajority support, but was ultimately defeated in the appropriations process.</p> <p><u>General Appropriations Act - Support for Food and Agricultural Development Centers (HB-2) (successful)</u></p> <p>Despite their value, funding for the centers was cut back during the 2011 legislative session, and faced the possibility of further cuts in 2013. Grow Montana helped lead the efforts to fund and expand the work of the Centers. Although the original bill (Fund food and agricultural development centers (HB 420)) died in the legislative process, the testimony and track record in favor of the Centers was so powerful that the legislature amended another bill, HB-2, to include \$600,000 for the Food and Agricultural Development Centers over the next two years (an increase of \$210,000 from the previous biennium).</p>
2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Denise Juneau, Superintendent of the Montana Office of Public Instruction declares October "Farm to School Month"
2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grow Montana participates in advisory board meetings and actively comments on HB 630 Food Safety Streamlining Process; cottage food bill is important component of this process • Grow Montana works with the Montana Office of Public Instruction to add staff capacity for Farm to School coordination (.5 FTE added in November 2014)