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ACTION SHEET: VOLUNTEER ROLES FOR AN EVENT

When organizing an event, there are many roles that can be assigned to volunteers, but it will likely take work to maximize the value that volunteers offer. This Action Sheet is intended to offer suggestions on the type of tasks volunteers might be asked to lead or undertake; and also suggestions on how to build ownership and otherwise keep volunteers engaged.

Volunteers in General

It will be useful to identify upfront the list of people willing to volunteer, and also what expertise they have and/or what they would like to do. Here are some suggestions to help keep the interest of Volunteers over a relatively long period:

- Maximize the interest of the Pod members by building ownership early; present the role of the Pod at the event, and seek feedback from Pod members.
- Be clear on the amount of time involved in the various roles/jobs for which you are seeking volunteer assistance.
- Create a spreadsheet that clearly delineates the types of tasks and the time commitment involved and ask people to sign up for specific tasks and/or roles.
- Welcome everyone to participate in ways that work for you and also for them (i.e., some volunteers may be happiest just participating the day of the event, while others will want to have a more intensive role).
- Build buy-in by holding a few meetings/meals with volunteers in advance of the event and by letting them know that you respect their time and how appreciative you are for their help.
- Set up a Facebook group to stay connected.
- Offer a t-shirt and free food.

The Steering Committee

The role you would like others to play will determine the size and scope of the Steering Committee. It is this Committee that can be your team of lead volunteers and the place where key decisions are made and coordination is organized. You should be clear about how often the Committee will meet and the scope of the Committee. Positions on the Committee and their responsibilities might include the following: (Please keep in mind that you can assign roles and responsibilities in a variety of ways and this is simply one example.)



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Possible Leadership Roles for Volunteers (who ideally would participate in the larger Steering Committee)

- 1) Volunteer Coordinator:** sends out requests for volunteers, keeps track of the tasks that are assigned to each of the volunteers, ensures the volunteers have the info they need and any gear they might be asked to wear, manages a volunteer table at the event where volunteers check in for their assignments.
- 2) Vendor and/or Sponsor Manager:** solicits businesses and organizations, handles the applications and contracts, receives payments, assigns vendors to available spaces, ensures the vendors have all the info they need for the event and is on hand the day of the event to assist them with locating their booths.
- 3) Logistics Director:** reserves the tables, chairs, and other equipment needed for the event, oversees setup and breakdown at the event.
- 4) Publicity Organizer:** designs and prints posters/flyers, distributes them, contacts local press and community calendars about the event, manages social media, oversees photography volunteers at the event.
- 5) Speaker Liaison:** finds speakers, stays in contact with them, greets them at the event, makes sure they have what they need for their talks/presentations.

Timeline for Volunteer Roles

One to Three Months Before the Event

- Distribute posters/flyers about the event around town
- Help solicit vendors/sponsors
- Get the word out on social media

One Week Before the Event

- Stuff "swag" bags for attendees
- Assemble programs (if they are multiple pages or need folding)
- Provide transportation for goodie bags, signs, t-shirts, or other event-related items

Day of the Event

- Setup
- Breakdown, and cleanup
- Register people and sell tickets (if there's an entrance fee)
- Sell t-shirts and other event-related products



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Timeline for Volunteer Roles, Cont'd

Day of the Event

- Welcome attendees and provide direction
- Distribute and collect evaluation forms
- Take Photographs of the event
- Parking assistance for participants and visitors

After the Event

- Data entry if evaluations were distributed
- Organize the leftover swag bags and t-shirts
- Post photographs from the event on social media/website
- Thank all who participated (volunteers and attendees)
- Reflect on lessons learned and decide whether or not to organize another event

Helpful Links

<http://vegfest.exploreveg.org/volunteer-instructions/>



Updated June 2017

We welcome your suggestions and ideas!
Please send them to info@plantpurecommunities.org