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Interview with Michelle Markesteyn-Ratcliffe, ODA, 2011

Michelle Markesteyn-Ratcliffe

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PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY
SUSTAINABILITY HISTORY PROJECT
INTERVIEW INDEX

INTERVIEWEE: Michelle Markesteyn-Ratcliffe, Dept of Agriculture

Interviewer: Megan Rice

Date: May 10, 2011

Location of Interview: Food Innovation Center

Research Assistant: Angelina Peters

Interview Series: Documenting Sustainable Practices in the Pacific Northwest

Recording Equipment: DIGITAL RECORDER (WINDOWS MEDIA AUDIO FILE) WITH AN
 EXTERNAL, OMNIDIRECTIONAL MICROPHONE

Time	Notes
0:35	What brought you to Portland? Works in Portland but lives in Hubbard, OR
1:00	Portland is greatest city to live
1:13	Attend College; Attended Northern College and University of Montana; Masters in Environmental Law and Policy at Vermont Law School and finished Tufts University with a PhD in Agricultural, Food and the Environment.
1:40	Farm to School Program.
1:42	New term only 12-15 years old.
2:00	Worked summer on a farm during college
2:11	Able to connect people with their food
2:20	Doctoral program doing school gardening.
2:27	You can change what people think about food
2:33	Kids love Swiss Chard but they can't eat it at home or at school. Became involved with procurement side of it.
2:51	School garden is very difficult. To get them started; embedding them in education and have them sustained.
3:10	Describe a typical day. No typicalness
3:21	Farm to school is unfolding; R&D

4:02	Boat to School Program
6:24	Eco Trust, Farm to School coordinator there
7:03	Funds for Farm to School program. Federal and State funding.
7:48	Institutionalize Farm to School across the state and nationally
7:55	In Oregon, push from Oregon Food and Farm to School Organization to have 3 things legislated.
8:10	1. Position in the Dept of Agriculture; secured in 2007.
8:15	2. Position in the Dept of Education; secured in 2008.
8:18	In 2009 and 2011 asking for \$22 million. \$19 million to fund state meals. \$3 million in school garden grants for School Garden coordinators.
8:39	Oregon state does not fund school meals and every other state in the country does assist to help fund school meals
8:50	Child nutrition programs are federally funded but states usually kick in a few cents (4 to 19 cents in California) and Oregon does not provide that supplement.
9:04	Hurdle number #2 is the economic recession
9:27	Linda Cowell. Organization Eat, Think, Grow well. Grow.org
10:00	Credits at PSU for the 32-hour training program
11:02	Farm to School volunteers?
11:31	Farm to School not really a program
11:48	Over 200 school gardens in the state
11:53	Benevolent brokers usually run by Non-profits
12:16	Oregon State University. Evaluating decrease duplication and increase efficiency. They have 4H and SNAP Ed.
13:23	Farm to School Network. 8 regional lead and Eco Trust is the Regional Lead.
13:56	School Food Focus. Working to get 40 largest school districts to bring healthier foods.
14:35	USDA Farm to School Team: 15 site visits and 2 of those were to Oregon
15:21	Receives the most benefit from Farm to School?
15:31	Everyone does.
15:52	Food production
16:06	Win for economy. Eco Trust survey. For every \$1.00 spent it brings back \$1.86 in

	community
16:23	Food to School is for environment. Provides opportunity
16:40	For the kids. Connect them to the Earth in meaningful ways.
17:13	Way our children eat is a national security issue.
17:23	Childhood obesity is a national security issue
17:31	WWI and WWII school meals program started. Not enough fit soldiers to fight in war.
17:49	Food production and fit soldiers to fight in wars
17:59	United States School Garden Army
18:23	People are over-nourished and under-nourished
18:44	Generals signed regarding school meals
19:21	Michelle Obama's book on School Gardening
20:05	Prepare for success in Food to School
20:31	Food to School carry over into adulthood
20:41	Leanne Burge research
20:58	Children decline in fruits and vegetable consumption
21:11	Farm to Preschool
22:00	Don't have to think about buying locally. It becomes the Norm and not the exception
22:29	Kids go to local store and see fruits and vegetables
22:52	Easier to buy organic strawberries from California then Oregon
23:16	Farm to School successful on all fronts
23:28	Policy, Networking, Media, Training and Technical and Communications
23:46	Procurement and Education
24:45	School Gardens date back to 1800's
25:00	Urban/Rural divide
25:41	Social capital: connection and meanings
26:21	Systemic address
26:33	Food is sacred in multicultural society
26:53	Definitions of sustainability: economic, social and environmental
28:00	US Agricultural needs portfolio

28:36	Proudest achievement: kids and pleasure in working with people in this field
29:40	Only 13-peer reviewed articles on Food to School programs
30:45	Persistent challenges: current system; Boat to School
31:44	Future of Farm to School: big steps will be made; a lot of work will be done behind the scenes, Farm to school imbedded nationally.
32:35	Self reliance-climate changes
33:55	Social capital
33:59	Career opportunities within Food to School and School Gardens
34:15	Farm to School and School Gardens is where the environmental movement was 30-40 years ago
34:34	Green jobs
35:40	State advocacy for school meals
37:03	Kids have say in school gardens
38:17	Resilience and youth
44:32	Danielle Meadows. Limits to Growth Theory