**Plotting Policy – Network Priorities and Action Plan** (sector policy small group work)

The sector policy small group work session was used as a vector through which we could determine priorities and develop an action plan for the Local Sustainable Food Systems Network. Our group focused on seafood issues primarily, and was comprised of Dave Adler, myself, and:

* Jordan Nikoloyuk, Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nations Chiefs Secretariat
* Don Mills, Local Food Plus & National Farmers Union
* Eric Chaurette, Food Secure Canada & Inter Pares
* Cathleen Kneen, Ram’s Horn & Just Food
* Abra Brynne, Food Secure Canada

The following are the notes I took during the varied discussion we had:

* Can there be a non-profit middle man?
	+ Facilitate the movement of food grown/caught well.
	+ Example: Red Tomato
		- Red Tomato is a New England-based non-profit organization that serves to facilitate the connection between producers and retail outlets, with a focus on ensuring a fair price for producers.
		- Red tomato works with over 40 farms, serving to aggregate supply.
		- Groups of farmers determine the price, and Red Tomato serves as a broker.
		- A Red Tomato-style non-profit operating as a middle man brokerage could be set up mixing fish, meat, produce, etc.
* We need to ensure that we build relationships amongst *unlikely* partners and allies.
	+ Relationships build jobs.
* Today’s dominant distribution model consists of producers handing off all the good work they do, leaving it in the control of distributors.
	+ Small-scale producers produce value-added products by the tenets they inherently espouse.
	+ How do we avoid giving away that value?
* A multidimensional non-profit brokerage service, encompassing food production from fisheries to produce, meats, grain, etc., could help to take advantage of several factors:
	+ Transportation is a difficult issue for isolated producers, but if existing transportation networks are pooled together, efficiencies could be established.
	+ Aggregating supply could help customers cope with seasonal and temporal variance.
	+ Could have an online hub component: a daily/weekly database that allows customers to see what is fresh and available, and to order accordingly.
* Where do we want to go with FSC over the next year?
	+ Look into feasibility of establishing an honest and transparent, multidimensional brokerage service.
		- Could this be a co-operative?
		- Could McConnell be involved?
		- Multifaceted: freezing, distribution, retail, etc.
		- An online catalogue.
		- Physical space(s).