



# Maryland Food System Resiliency Council

Environment & Production Subcommittee

November 10, 2022 1:00pm -2:00pm

## 1. Welcome

- a. The Annual FSRC Report was released, and will be available on the [website](#).

## 2. Group Discussion

- a. Review 2022 Parking Lot Items/Next Steps
- b. Group Brainstorming Session - Goals and Task for 2023
- c. Determine Prioritization of Goals/Objectives and Team Assignment
  - i. The subcommittee ranked the following items identified from the “parking lot list”, using the google polling activity (results indicated below):
    1. Mitigate the carbon footprint of Maryland’s food system and address climate change impacts on farmers, regional and local food systems, and how to plan for adaptation.
    2. Understand barriers to small producers expanding, including contradictory regulations (zoning barriers), economies of scale for equipment (shared resources and joint services), and risks associated with non-commodity/non-traditional crops, and legislative initiatives to overcome these barriers. Additional barriers could include access to land, access to seasonal workers at small farms, as well as access to affordable housing for workers, including zoning and easement barriers for housing.
    3. Establish a pilot program with a handful of Area Aging Agencies in Maryland, facilitated by the Department of Aging, to increase procurement of fresh, local produce through grants and technical assistance.



4. Support the development of Resilience Hubs to include food assistance mechanisms.
5. Ensure that Maryland's food and farmworkers have safe and fair working conditions, and explore the labor needs, challenges, and opportunities related to the food system in Maryland.
6. Understand if there is a need for incentives, decreased policy barriers, or technical assistance for food waste composting, manure composting, anaerobic digestion, biochar, and other organics re-utilization, and how these carbon-based fertilizers could be incorporated into nutrient management plans or other programs to provide incentives for increasing organic matter in soil, such as outcome-based payments to farmers for implementing effective healthy soils/carbon sequestration practices by measuring organic carbon or organic matter.
7. Support a statewide food waste reduction campaign and determine how new and existing efforts are integrated and what new initiatives that might bridge efforts across the food waste landscape.
8. Promote climate-resilient agriculture in Maryland through data-driven, demonstration projects at the Maryland Agricultural Experiment Stations located throughout the state (operated by the University of Maryland College of Agriculture and Natural Resources) for collecting quantifiable data and creating Extension and outreach materials that help farmers adapt to climate change and enable climate change adaptation and mitigation (through carbon sequestration and greenhouse gas emission reduction) policy development.
9. Create a pilot Farm Conservation Program to mitigate climate change, including determining the climate-friendly agricultural practices should be eligible for funding under the pilot program (such as increasing soil organic matter, prescribed grazing, or commodity transitions), establishing metrics for greenhouse gas



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(GHG) emission reductions, and then verifying the GHG emission reductions achieved for the agricultural practices funded in the pilot program.

10. Understand the extent of the need for additional enforcement and technical assistance around existing state environmental protection laws for agriculture, including water pollution control permits, nutrient management plans, and the phosphorus management tool.
  - ii. Other Subcommittee considerations ( [please refer to google doc](#) ):
    1. What are the strategies to reduce the region's fossil fuel input in our local agriculture?
    2. What are our strategies for improving agriculture resilience to climate extremes (e.g. MEER)?
    3. Future subject matter experts to present to the subcommittee:
      - a. MDE per the Climate Change Commission.
      - b. The Hughes Center on the [Climate Vulnerability/Resiliency Assessment for Maryland Agriculture](#) findings.
      - c. AI and Agriculture – potential opportunity to bring subject matter experts from the University of Maryland
    4. Suggested subject matter experts on Maryland's Agriculture Today:
      - a. University of Maryland Agri. Economics
      - b. Farm Credit
      - c. MDA maintains the data of implemented Best Management Practices -BMPs in addition to the



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Comet data that tracks carbon sequestration practices on an annual basis

- d. MDE – [Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emission in Maryland : A Progress Report](#) and [Maryland Commission on Climate Change](#)

5. Larger considerations for mitigation: agriculture is considered to contribute 4% to emissions, however some emissions that could be considered as agriculture are contributed to other sectors. Other items missing include a relevant time scale for global warming potential for methane from manure management. Another component missing is the carbon opportunity cost from land use changes, and carbon sequestration reduction potential, providing more opportunity for Maryland to reduce emissions.

### 3. Next steps and adjourn

- a. Invite subject matter expert from :
  - i. MDE or Hughes Center: Climate Commission for December meeting
  - ii. State of Agriculture for January's meeting