



# Maryland Food System Resiliency Council

Draft Agenda for December 1, 2022

Time	Agenda Item
10:00	<p>Welcome - Russ, and Sydney, Co-Chairs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Roll Call - Brittany Cook, MDEM               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Adopted minutes from October</li> <li>○ Adopted December's agenda</li> <li>○ Sydney Daigle- Announced resignation, and appointment of a replacement representative for the PG Food Equity Council</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	<p>Co-Chair Election (Appointment until June 2023)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Currently per statute only a member of a food council organization can fill the co-chair role.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <u>Eligible Members:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Heather Bruskin</li> <li>■ Lee Babcock</li> <li>■ Theresa Stahl RD</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Nominees per FSRC appointed members:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Heather Bruskin (formally accept co-chair position for the remaining term starting in January)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	<p>2023 FSRC Tours Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● There is a lunch and learn survey available until Dec 5<sup>th</sup> to identify FSRC members' topics of interest for future sessions. We have confirmed two tours/in-person visits:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ April 19<sup>th</sup>: There are three stops scheduled. First, ECO City Farms is a nonprofit urban teaching and learning farm in Prince George's County that grows food, farms and farmers in ways that protect, restore and sustain the natural environment and the health of local communities. Working with area children, youth and adults, ECO educates and trains the next generation of urban farmers and eaters.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Second, the Urban Farm Incubator (UFI) at Watkins Regional Park is a partnership between ECO, M-NCPPC, the Prince George's County Soil Conservation District, the Prince George's County Food Equity Council, and Capital Market 20743. The UFI provides experienced farmworkers and graduates of farmer training programs with half-acre plots on which to start their businesses. Farmers can steward their plots for up to 5 years, and have access to shared tools, infrastructure, market connections, and technical support.

Third, Purple Mountain Organics is operated by farmers Nazirahk Amen and Amanda Heinbaugh with an intent to support local food sustainability through regenerative practices. Purple Mountain Grown grows food with the understanding that a healthy soil microbiome is created through the use of compost, cover cropping, and other soil health building practices.

- June 26th: Caroline County visit provides the opportunity to observe Farm to School operations, as well as other initiatives which include:
  - visit to Greensboro elementary cafeteria
  - Central backpack building
  - Dry and cold storage operations
  - Mobile bus operations
  - Culinary center for lunch and tour
  - Spirulina farm
- Separate google invites will be sent to all appointed members to determine attendance for each tour.

#### Welcome

- Sabrina Chase –MDEM – Principal Counsel, Assistant Attorney General Executive Office
- Isabella Dresser (Bea) Congressional Hunger Fellows

10:20

#### Standing Meeting Changes

- To alleviate attendance and quorum challenges, as well as factor in the upcoming in-person tours, we will move recurring meetings to a bimonthly schedule starting January 2023. Committees will continue to meet per the committee chair's determination.
- A survey will be sent to all appointed members to determine scheduling for January, since winter MACo and the legislative

session are scheduled during the first two weeks.

#### Communication and Coordination Updates -Michael J Wilson

- Meetings are at 1pm on Monday during the session, to discuss considerations for legislation. We want to ensure everyone has access to standing meetings during the session so everyone's perspectives are heard.
- Legislative considerations and process within the committee on behalf of the Food System resiliency Council include:
  - We do not need to take a position on every bill proposed during the session. However if an individual organization desires to take a position, they can do so on behalf of their organization. All FSRC considerations for a position on proposed legislation will be determined by the Communication and Coordination committee.
  - We will attempt to notify interested parties of bills under consideration of the committee as soon as possible; however this can be a challenge due to the quick turnaround time during session.
  - This year (2023) the committee will not be required to have council leadership approval prior to acting on legislative recommendations, determined by the committee. Last year (2022) C&C were required to obtain leadership approval prior to acting on legislative recommendations. This process was determined ineffective for timely response of the FSRC, and since all members and leadership of the council have access to attend the committee meetings, seeking further approval is not necessary.
- Comments/Questions: Public engagement and stakeholder participation is encouraged, in the past testimony was much richer with the support of other voices. Individuals are not required to join the committee in order to participate in discussion.
- MDEM has obtained a contract with CHHS for legislative tracking and support (including equity analysis). The presentation provided by JHU last year was provided to CHHS as a model, this in-depth analysis can be provided on select legislation.

#### Environment and Production Updates

- The committee will continue to meet bi-weekly on Thursdays from 1-2pm; next meeting is scheduled for December 8, 2022. All

meetings are open to the public, and all stakeholders are welcome to join. Note: During November and December the committee will meet once each month due to the holidays.

- Nine of the recommendations in the 2022 FSRC Report were developed from this committee; the committee will track those recommendations during the session to determine if any are supported to become legislation, as well as support legislation from the previous year.
- During the November meeting the committee completed a polling process for the “parking lot” items listed in the November 1<sup>st</sup> Report to determine where to focus efforts for the committee in 2023. Note: Ten parking lot items were considered per the committee expertise and subject matter interest.
- Top identified interests include: understanding climate change impacts on farmers, regional/local food systems, and how to plan for adaptation. The next meeting, December 8<sup>th</sup> will focus on Resilience, and the following meetings in January will focus on farmers’ adaptation to climate change. The goal is to determine how to incorporate food into climate change efforts.
- Other parking lot items under consideration include: to understand barriers to small scale producers (e.g. zoning laws, shared equipment, access to land), existing pilot programs with area aging agencies, food resiliency hubs, working conditions for Maryland farm workers, understanding policies/incentive barriers for composting and digestion of food scraps and other organic substrates, and support MDE new food waste reduction policy.
- Questions/Comments: For the January 5<sup>th</sup> meeting, how are you inviting small farmers? We are inviting a farmer (Chip Bowling, Maryland grain producer) to join the virtual meeting to discuss adaptation practices undertaken to increase soil health capacity with climate change, and a farmer’s perspective. Inviting other farmers to join the meeting to engage in dialog is a great idea, we will create an announcement to advertise guest speakers, which can be circulated to the larger group.

#### Distribution and Access Updates - Diana Taylor

- The committee will track the local food coordinating bodies/food council recommendation presented in the November 1<sup>st</sup> FSRC report during session to determine if there is legislative support.
- Other considerations under discussion include SNAP/TCA benefit national concern, stolen benefits are not replaced leading to a delay in benefits for at least 30 days. There is

movement surrounding this concern, the committee will continue to monitor this issue.

- The committee will examine the following items :
  - TEFAP to identify current program operations, gaps, barriers
  - funding sources given during the pandemic for food assistance, and the impact of ending pandemic assistance on food distribution and food integrity(e.g. food banks, and local pantries).
- Questions/Comments: The spike in fraud for SNAP/TCA benefits has resulted in over 1 million dollars of lost benefits within the last couple of months. Senator Hester, and Congressman Ruppertsberger are working on similar proposals to address this issue (Note: Senator Hester will provide FSRC members the proposed draft at a later date).
- When SNAP benefits are stolen this is a cybercrime, participants should not be left alone to resolve this issue. This is a complicated issue, a Federal/State resolution is needed.

11:30

#### Council Member Round Table & Updates

- Michael J Wilson – Higher Education Commission implemented a matching grant program, to provide grant/funding for anti-hunger work at several campuses. This is not only benefiting students, but also the community.