

Jan 20, 2022 |

📅 Environment & Production Subcommittee Meeting

Attendees: Blake BMC blrogers@umes.edu brewster.amanda@ccpsstaff.org
Janice Wiles Criss, Jeremy les@richardsonfarms.net Leslie Sessom-Parks -MSDE-
Lee Babcock Mark Powell -MDA- Megan Bluthardt Nancy K Nunn Stephanie Lansing
Steve McHenry Vanessa Calaban -MDEM-

1. Legislative Update

- a. HB178 - Cottage Food Business - increasing revenue cap
 - i. Enabling small local businesses to be exempt from higher regulations - makes it easier for small industry; 100k revenue doesn't sound like a lot, when taking costs of supplies, equipment, and insurance into account (from Les Richardson)
 - ii. *E&P recommends supporting this bill*
 - **Cottage industry licensing fees? Can this be a recommendation for the 2022 report?**
 - Janice Wiles wants more information from MDA/somewhere about cottage industry - Kurt Engell deals with the cottage industry
- b. HB100 Sustainable Maryland Program Fund
 - i. *Not entirely food-focused, so we will monitor this for now*
- c. SB39 - Meat Inspection/Farms Buy Local Act
 - i. Purpose of the bill is to set up a committee to study whether we should or shouldn't restart state inspection of processing plants (12 month timeline from inception to report to MDA)
 - Dr. Lansing: there's a lot of discussion, and the task force could probably answer those questions
 - *Support, but with amendments? Include MARBIDCO, UMD extension; Dr. Lansing will draft testimony*
 - ii. Original purpose of federal inspectors-only was to streamline regulations by focusing on large-scale harvesting; we now know that this was flawed and possibly excludes smaller livestock entities
 - iii. Federal inspection means that MD suppliers can sell across state lines
 - iv. Currently 18 small processors in the state; how many before 1991?
 - Mark Powell will look into it
 - v. Steve McHenry: not a huge advantage to restarting state inspections
 - vi. Jeremy Criss: facilities inspected by feds need particular accommodations for inspectors (showers, nap places, etc)
- d. SB263 - Beverage Options for Children's Meals
 - i. Sydney will follow up with sponsor for clarification on definitions, scope, etc

- ii. Children's meals are often age-based; at what age do meals have to be compliant?
 - e. HB184 - on-farm compost
 - i. Farms are subject to regulations if they have composting on-site, even if it's just an accessory to normal farming operations (unless it's a very small area used for composting)
 - ii. "On-farm" part - is the operation related to farming? Or are they trying to get around regulations (is it actually part of the farm as an accessory)
 - iii. Compost Crew -MoCo outposts on farms
 - iv. *Support - Jeremy Criss will draft testimony*
 - f. Miscellaneous updates from Steve McHenry:
 - i. Governor's budget acted on FSRC report recommendation to increase funding for livestock processing
 - ii. MARBIDCO reallocated funds to provide cold storage grant funding (\$1k max grants to farmers) especially to oyster and urban farmers (\$150k total allocated), can start applying in May, funding available in July (hopefully)
 - iii. New info in the Dropbox about livestock processing
- 2. Parking lot discussion
 - a. Healthy Soils Initiative update
 - i. Committee meeting on 24th (open to the public)
 - ii. <https://meet.google.com/tva-yxcf-xyn>
 - iii. Final report to be voted on
 - iv. Concern: HSI is concerned with just soil; not necessarily to be growing food for Maryland, or food at all
 - Are these goals too different to be reconciled?
 - v. *Final decision to support to be made after report is out/approved*
- 3. Next steps
 - a. Next meeting falls on the same day as the full FSRC meeting; might move or cancel E&P

Action items

- Steve to send out information about eligibility for cold storage grants once available/finalized
- Jeremy to draft written testimony for compost bill
- Stephanie to draft written testimony for meat inspection bill