



TRANSFORMATIVE FEDERAL INVESTMENTS IN OUR REGION'S FOOD SYSTEM?

EXPLORING WHAT'S KNOWN ABOUT USDA'S REGIONAL FOOD BUSINESS CENTERS

Tuesday, August 23, 2022

9:00 A.M. – 10:30 A.M.

WebEx Connection Information:

<https://mwcog.webex.com/mwcog/j.php?MTID=me1fa5e026c864f61783e1e508fe55aaf>

Meeting number: 2422 310 8280

Password: regionalFood4all

If possible, attendees are urged to participate using a computer, laptop, or tablet to access the WebEx chat.

Join by phone

+1-202-860-2110 United States Toll (Washington D.C.)

Access code: 242 231 08280

THIS MEETING WILL BE RECORDED

Meeting Objectives:

- Share what we know about the Regional Food Business Centers (RFBCs) and provide an open forum for learning.
 - Does anybody know anything additional to what has been shared today?
- Keep the social imperative to transform our food system at top of mind. How can a proposal from our region center underserved communities in ways that are transformational?
- Learn from an experienced technical assistance provider in another region about how they are thinking about the RFBCs opportunity.
- Connect or reconnect with some of the people, organizations, businesses, institutions, etc., working to transform our region's food system in the District of Columbia, Maryland, Virginia and broader Mid-Atlantic.
- Identify who is interested in continuing this conversation to prepare for the release of an RFA and a competitive response.

Reasonable accommodations are provided upon request, including alternative formats of meeting materials.
Visit www.mwcog.org/accommodations or call (202) 962-3300 or (202) 962-3213 (TDD).

AGENDA

9:00 A.M. 1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS, AND OBJECTIVES FOR TODAY'S CALL

Lindsay Smith, Regional Food Systems Planner, Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG)

Lindsay Smith will provide a short welcome, review meeting logistics and objectives, and ask participants to introduce themselves.

Please be prepared to share your name, affiliation, website or social media (if applicable), in the WebEx chat.

Participants are encouraged to use the chat to pose questions or share key pieces of information relevant to today's meeting.

9:10 A.M. 2. OBSERVATIONS ON PROCESSES, PROJECTS, AND PARTNERSHIPS TO ENSURE THAT UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES ARE RESOURCED TO TRANSFORM LOCAL AND REGIONAL FOOD SYSTEMS

*Chris Bradshaw, Executive Director, Dreaming Out Loud, Inc
Dr. Marcus Comer, Extension Specialist/Associate Professor, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Virginia State University College of Agriculture*

To help frame our meeting, Chris Bradshaw and Dr. Marcus Comer will share observations from their experiences on building impactful, inclusive proposals and projects that address the needs of underserved producers and communities.

9:20 A.M. 3. WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE REGIONAL FOOD BUSINESS CENTERS?

Will Gray, Managing Director, Eastern Food Hub Collaborative

Will Gray will briefly summarize what is in the public record about the USDA Regional Food Business Centers (RFBC) and introduce our featured speaker.

9:25 A.M. 4. A REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVE ON A TRANSFORMATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

*Todd Erling, Executive Director, [Hudson Valley AgriBusiness Development Corporation](#) (HVADC)
Founding Executive Committee Member, [Agricultural Viability Alliance](#)*

Todd Erling will begin his remarks with any additional insights into what he has gleaned from USDA's work to develop the RFBC concept thus far. He will then provide an overview of HVADC's mission, work, and partnerships.

Todd will share how he is thinking about this opportunity from the standpoint of an organization already doing some of the type of work that the RFBCs seem like they will be dedicated to.

What kind of proposal does he envision for his region? What are considerations for defining the region? Who could some of the applicants and partners be?

Several respondents from the team that planned today's meeting will ask a question or offer an observation for consideration before broader question and answer and discussion begins.

Respondents include:

- Nancy Nunn, Assistant Director, Harry R Hughes Center for Agro-Ecology
- Chris Bradshaw, Executive Director, Dreaming Out Loud, Inc
- Tom McDougall, Founder/CEO, 4P Foods
- Dr. Marcus Comer, Extension Specialist/Associate Professor, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Virginia State University College of Agriculture
- Fritz Boettner, Food System Development Director, Center for Resilient Communities, West Virginia University

10:15 AM **5. TAKEAWAYS, NEXT STEPS, AND ADJOURN**

Lindsay Smith, Regional Food Systems Planner, COG
Nancy Nunn, Assistant Director, Harry R Hughes Center for Agro-Ecology
Will Gray, Managing Director, Eastern Food Hub Collaborative

Following discussion, participants will be asked to share a key takeaway from today's meeting. Lindsay Smith, Nancy Nunn, and Will Gray will facilitate, summarize any action items, and share proposed next steps.

A high-level meeting summary will be posted when available at:
<https://www.mwcog.org/events/2022/8/23/transformative-federal-investments-in-our-region-s-food-system/>