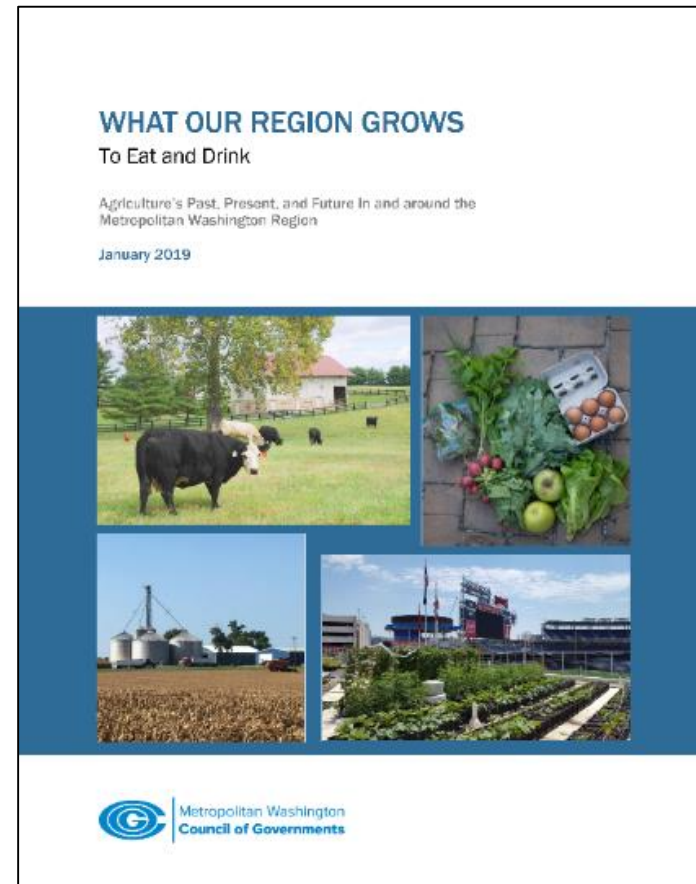


Agriculture Task Force Update

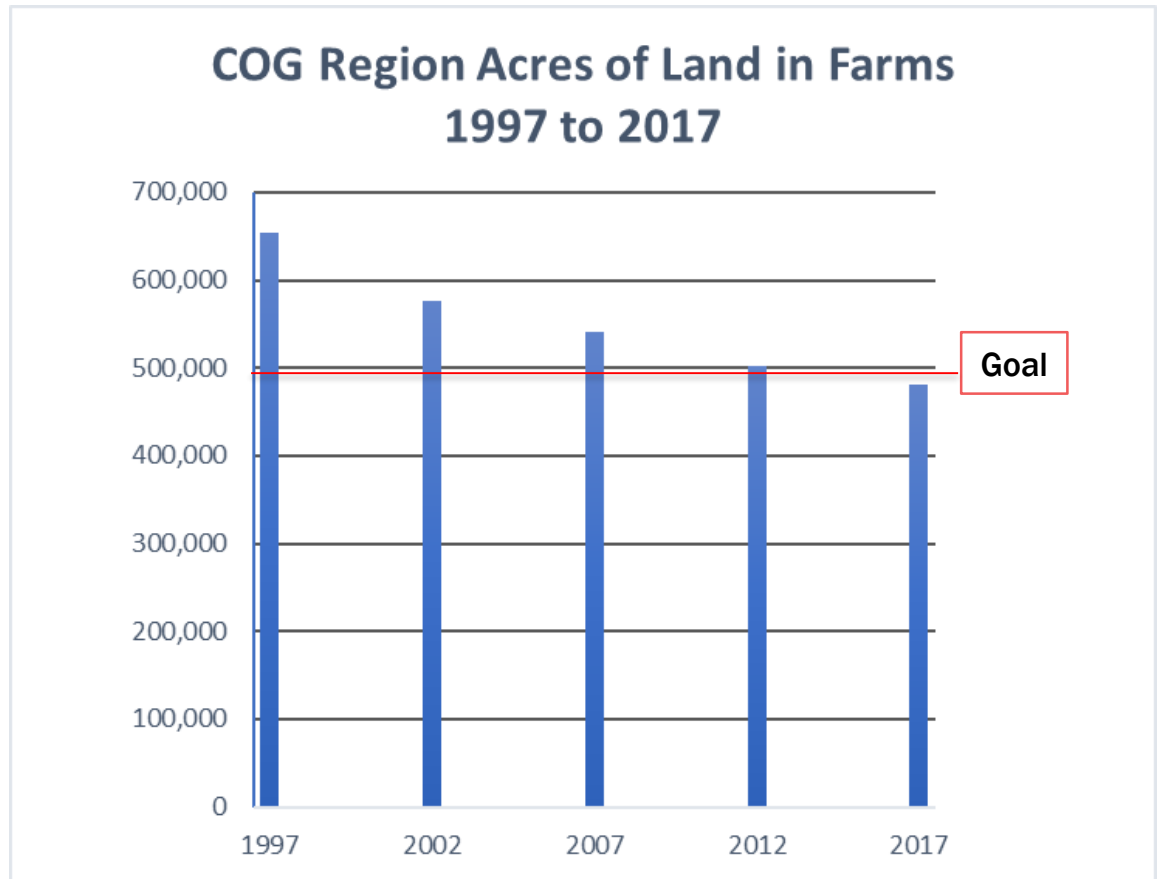
- Ag Task Force formed following presentation of *What Our Region Grows* to CBPC in March 2019
- Six volunteer members from VA and MD asked COG staff to assess regional interest, capacity, and resources to implement report recommendations
- Developed several products and provided regular updates to CBPC on progress



2019 *What Our Region Grows* report

Our Region's Food and Ag Future?

- Food and Agriculture have significant economic impacts in DC, MD, and VA
- At same time, troubling trends e.g. continued loss of land in farms



The region has dropped below COG Region Forward Goal to maintain more than 497,500 acres of land in farms

VISION

Our goal is a more resilient, connected food and farm economy across urban, suburban and rural communities in the metropolitan Washington region that provides more of the region's food needs: a disruption of current trends. This transformation to create a more certain food future will result in workforce development, economic growth, environmental, health, and cultural benefits, including as these relate to climate change. An increased number of diverse food and agricultural enterprises will be more visible, supported, and celebrated by residents, leaders, and visitors of all kinds

Photo: Lindsay Smith/Bok Choy from The Farm at Sunnyside



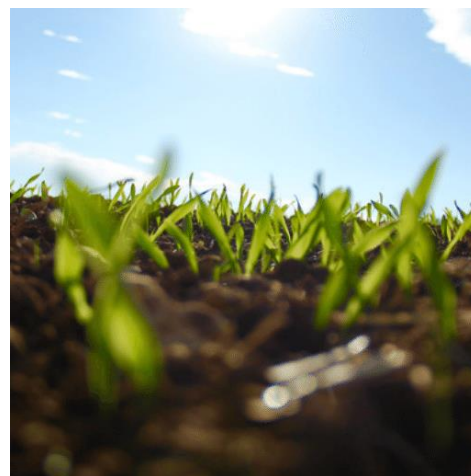
Recommended Next Steps

Form a 10-year Regional Food and Ag Economy Commission to oversee report implementation, facilitate unique benefits that regional collaboration brings

Institutionalize Regional Food Systems Program

- Requires additional funding

Find opportunities for alignment with other efforts



Benefits of Healthy Soils

- Improved water holding capacity
- Sequester carbon and reduce GHG emissions
- Functions as a biological system; habitat for important soil organisms
- Long-term sustainability of agriculture
- Enhance crop quality
- Improve resistance to weeds and pests

Source: COG

Funding Strategy Discussion

Seeking interested members to leverage philanthropic and COG financial commitments in FY21 and beyond

One-page COG Agriculture Task Force Proposal

Update and discussion of initial commitments



Photo: Lindsay Smith/Harvest time at Fabbioni Cellars in Loudoun County

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