

LOCAL FOOD DISTRIBUTION

MD Market Center Concept Meeting

Steve Bieber, MWCOG

Brian LeCouteur, MWCOG

Lindsay Smith, MWCOG

Dr. Donald J. Darnall, Maryland Food Center Authority

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Metropolitan Washington
Council of Governments

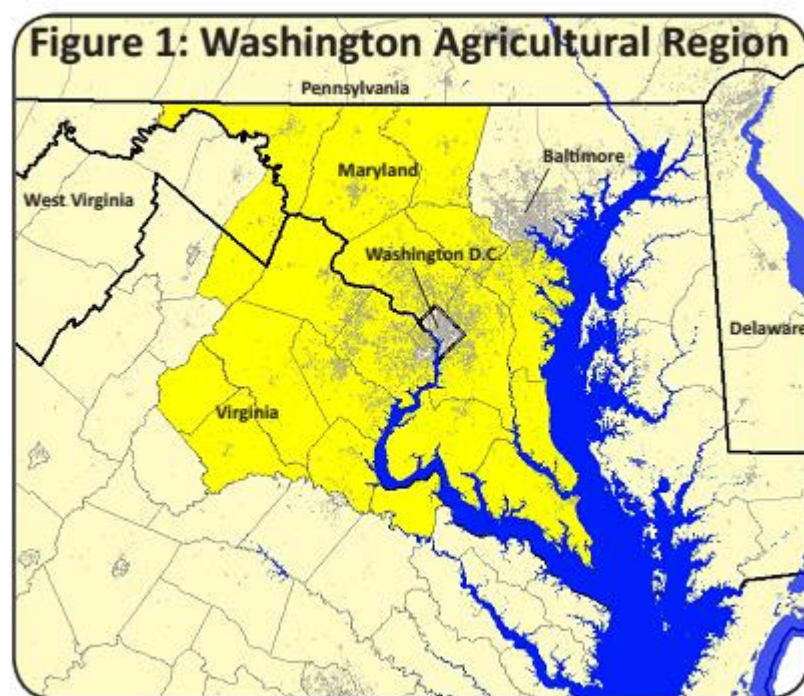
About COG

- The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) is an independent, nonprofit association
- Brings area leaders together to address major regional issues in the District of Columbia, suburban Maryland and Northern Virginia
- Membership is comprised of 300 elected officials from 24 local governments, the Maryland and Virginia state legislatures, and U.S. Congress



Food & Agriculture in the National Capital Region

- COG's 2012 *What Our Region Grows Report* found 28% of 8,629 sq mile Washington Agricultural Region in ag land use
- Preserves critical open space, contributes approx \$1 billion/year to economy
- Commodity farming predominates, growing interest and production of a range of other agricultural products, local seafood



Washington Agricultural Region from
What Our Region Grows

April 28th: Local Food Distribution Conf

VA Dept of Ag • MD Dept of Ag • MD Farm Bureau • VA Farm Bureau • Future Harvest Chesapeake Alliance for Sustainable Agriculture • VA Association of Biological Farming • PA Association for Sustainable Agriculture • WV Food & Farm Coalition • MWCOG • Montgomery County Department of Agriculture • Loudoun County Economic Development • Loudoun County Public Schools • Loudoun County Soil and Water Conservation District • Southern MD Ag Dev Commission • USDA • MD Food Center Authority • MD SHA • VA DOT • DDOT • Baltimore Metropolitan Council • Baltimore Food Policy Initiative • Keany Produce • Coastal Sunbelt Produce • Local Food Hub • 4P Foods • From the Farmer • Treaserra Organic Growers • Chesapeake Harvest • Mock's Greenhouse • Potomac City Farms • DC Central Kitchen • Capital Area Food Bank • Arlington Food Assistance Center • Food for Others • Arcadia • United Fresh Produce Association • LuLu's Local Food Hub • Northern Neck Fresh, LLC • Virginia Community Food Connections • Community Foodworks • DC Greens • Montgomery County Food Council • Prince George's Food Equity Council • MD Farmers Market Assoc • Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission • Chesapeake Foodshed Network • Second Spring Farm • Chesapeake Farm to Table • Glen's Garden Market • The Common Market • T&E Meats • Virginia State Dairymen's Association • Chesapeake Farm to Table • Potomac Sprout Company • Dorchesters Farm FoodHUB • Shenandoah Growers • UMD Extension (PGC) • MD Organic Food and Farming Assoc



Panels

KEYNOTE: Getting More Local Food to Market in the National Capital Region: A Wholesale Perspective

Meeting the Demand for Local Food: Grower and Distributor Perspectives on Demand and Getting Produce to Market

Distributing Local Food to the Region: Infrastructure and Transportation Perspectives

Opportunities and Barriers for Local Food: Pasture-raised Livestock and Dairy

Other Local Food Distribution Considerations



Themes and Observations

- Expertise
- Farmers want to supply more local food
- Decentralization and Optimization
- Relationships and Networks
- Education
- Infrastructure and Information
- Desire to Collaborate
- Strategic Engagement
- Invest in Small



Evaluation

“The biggest barrier for small farmers is lack of required food safety certifications. which will prevent most wholesale and institutional sales opportunities. If we want to help small farms to "ladder" up the issue of GAPS must be tackled directly. Otherwise, or in parallel, we must work to ensure high quality direct to consumer sales channels and transportation efficiencies. Regional collaboration on these issues could move the needle.”

- Farmers Market Organization Director



Evaluation

“How can MWCOG simplify any portion of this puzzle for a meaningful amount of the stakeholders? Even as a business owner who cares about this topic and invests time to be involved, the amount of agencies and organizations is overwhelming and almost intimidating and it would be much easier to hibernate.”

- Distributor

“We need to discuss how to create incentives for farmers to produce for wholesale buyers because most wholesale buyers are not stakeholders in the local food economy.”

- Agricultural Marketing Specialist

“There were a lot of great conversations revolving around market based mechanisms. I am wondering what policy opportunities may be available, such as incentives for distributors to incorporate a percentage of their businesses for local foods.”

- Funder



Next Steps

- Connected networks
- Shape and focus of Working Group
- Data and information
- Upcoming Meetings:

Tentative: July 11, 2017
**Local Food Distributor
Listening Session** (call)
with DC Department of
Transportation



Discussion

Questions and Comments?

For April 28th Meeting Participants:

- Your thoughts on the meeting?
- Any new promising business or other contacts you'd like to share?

Lindsay Smith

Regional Food Systems Value Chain Coordinator

(202) 962-3307

lismith@mwkog.org

mwkog.org

777 North Capitol Street NE, Suite 300

Washington, DC 20002



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