

**METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
777 North Capitol Street, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002-4239**

**RESOLUTION TO ENDORSE THE "WHAT OUR REGION GROWS" AGRICULTURAL REPORT
AND ITS RECOMMENDATIONS AND THE CREATION OF A COMPANION URBAN FOCUSED
REPORT IN CALENDAR YEAR 2013**

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) has a long history of supporting policies and programs to establish and achieve economic, environmental, and sustainability goals for the Metropolitan Washington Region; and

WHEREAS, the Council has provided coordination and support for the Washington Regional Agricultural Workgroup (RAW), which represents local government agricultural interests in the COG region, and whose related activities and initiatives have been supported by the Council since 2006; and

WHEREAS, *Region Forward* sets a sustainability target of maintaining at least 450,000 acres of agricultural farmland in the region; and

WHEREAS, supporting agriculture in the COG region while protecting public health and the region's environment are essential to the viability and livability of our region and its economy; and

WHEREAS, agriculture represents an important part of the region's economy, constituting approximately 28 percent of the region's land area and contributing approximately \$1 billion annually to its economy, yet farmland, farms, and farmers are at risk due to policy barriers and inadequate infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, regional food economies are an important source of employment in our communities, and supporting the development of local food infrastructure can help build stronger markets for regional food production, improve access to healthy foods, encourage the consumption of local foods, and improve the security of a diverse food supply for our region; and

WHEREAS, a "What Our Region Grows" report has been completed that identifies options and recommendations for the support of 21st century agriculture in the our region; and

WHEREAS, the Region Forward Coalition, the Chesapeake Bay and Water Resources Policy Committee, the Climate, Energy, and Environment Policy Committee, and the Regional Agriculture Workgroup have provided input on development of the final report recommendations; and

WHEREAS, local governments have an important role to play in creating a healthy and sustainable food system that will help to maintain and improve the region's competitiveness and create a prosperous future for all area residents while meeting the region's environmental goals and regulatory requirements;

WHEREAS, implementation of the "What Our Region Grows" report is a high priority for RAW, and the Council's endorsement, report dissemination assistance, and related follow up actions are all critical for overall success.

DRAFT FOR CEEPC CONSIDERATION 11-28-2012

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS THAT:

1. The Board hereby approves the "What Our Region Grows" report as a guiding document for supporting regional agriculture and helping achieve the *Region Forward* agriculture land preservation target.
2. The "What Our Region Grows" report shall be transmitted to all COG member jurisdictions and widely distributed to regional stakeholders.
3. Before the end of calendar year 2013, a companion regional agricultural report will be prepared that can support *Economy Forward*, which focuses on the urbanized portion of the COG region, and covers:
 - a. Local farming, food production, and distribution;
 - b. Agricultural education and outreach; and
 - c. Urban agriculture.