



REGIONAL FOOD AGGREGATION & DISTRIBUTION SUMMIT:

ADVANCING INSTITUTIONAL SOURCING OF REGIONALLY GROWN FOODS

HOSTED BY THE DMV FOOD COUNCIL COLLABORATIVE & REGIONAL AGRICULTURE WORK GROUP

Tuesday, December 16, 2025
9:30 am to 3:30 pm

In Person: [Reservoir Center for Water Solutions](#)
301 Water St SE,
Washington, DC 20003

Teams Meeting (10 a.m. -12:00 p.m.): [Join the meeting now](#)
Meeting ID: 240 053 999 543 93
Passcode: Bk3iG6FB

Summit Goals:

- **Identify and Promote Connectivity Between Network Stakeholders:** Identify and connect key regional stakeholders, including funders, universities, school systems, and government agencies, to build a robust network supporting values-based procurement initiatives. Ensure the summit audience includes a wide range of stakeholders (e.g., local governments, producers, school systems, hospitals, universities) to facilitate cross-sector collaboration and reduce duplication.
- **Surface Barriers and Challenges:** Build trust and provide a supportive environment for decision-makers to engage in dialogue about the specific challenges to values-based procurement.
- **Facilitate Resource and Knowledge Sharing:** Highlight and promote innovative models, such as forward contracting and regional value chains, and explore how these can be adapted and scaled across different types of institutions. Create mechanisms for sharing resources, best practices, and lessons learned across institutions, enabling stakeholders to leverage existing tools, contacts, and strategies for more effective procurement.

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

- 9:30 A.M. REGISTRATION & NETWORKING**
- Coffee, tea, and light snacks
 - Informal networking
- 10:00 A.M. 1. WELCOME**
Andrew Friedson, FARM Committee Chair & Councilmember, Montgomery County, Maryland
- Opening remarks and recent related FARM Policy Committee initiatives
- 10:05 A.M. 2. SUMMIT OVERVIEW**
Sydney Daigle, Regional Food Systems Consultant, MWCOG
- Review of summit goals and expected outcomes
 - Overview of event resources
 - Small group introductions
- 10:30 A.M. 3. KEYNOTE ADDRESS: THE POWER AND POTENTIAL OF REGIONAL PROCUREMENT**
Alice Chalmers, Senior Advisor, Chesapeake Agriculture Innovation Center
- Why regional collaboration matters for aggregation and distribution
 - Recent successes and ongoing challenges in institutional procurement
- 11:10 A.M. 4. PANEL DISCUSSION: OVERCOMING CHALLENGES IN VALUES-BASED PROCUREMENT**
Sara Pollock Hoverter, Director, Center for Community Health Innovation, O'Neill Institute for National and Global Health Law, Georgetown Law
Dalila Boclin, Director of Food System Investment, Locus
Thelonius Cook, Owner-Operator, Mighty Thundercloud Edible Forest & Board President, Mid-Atlantic Black Farmers Caucus
Andrea Early, Director of Food and Nutrition, Prince William County Public Schools
- Regional leaders share experiences with budget constraints, policy hurdles, and innovative solutions
 - Audience Q&A
- 12:00 PM 5. LUNCH**
- Optional guided networking topics at tables .

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1:00 P.M.

6. THEMATIC TABLETOP TALKS & DISCUSSION

Short presentations (10 minutes each) will be followed by facilitated discussions. Attendees will have two rounds of discussions. Topics include:

- **Lessons from the Field: Perspectives from Producers Engaged in Institutional Sales**
Producer TBA
- **Meeting the Mark: Maryland's 20% Local Food Institutional Food Sourcing Requirement**
Stepanie Lansing, Professor, University of Maryland & Co-Chair, Maryland Food System Resilience Council
Karen Fedor, Program Administrator, Maryland Department of Agriculture's Marketing Office
- **Getting Ahead of the Curve: Forward-Planning Guidance and Success Stories**
Amy Zerante, Farm to School Account Manager, 4P Foods
- **Harvesting Success: Connecting Students and Community Through Local Food Procurement**
Jason Tepper, Executive Chef, School Nutrition, Alexandria City Public Schools
- **Workforce Matters: Centering Labor as a Values-Based Procurement Strategy**
Nezahualcoyotl Xiuhtecutili, Sr. Grassroots Advocacy Coordinator National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition

2:10 P.M.

7. BREAKOUT SESSIONS: DEVELOPING COLLABORATIVE SOLUTIONS

- Participants select one of the following focus areas:
 - Technology & Resource Sharing
 - Policy & Legislative Advocacy for Local Procurement
 - Innovative Contracting Models and Procurement Strategies
- All sessions will include strategies to map stakeholders and strengthen the region's aggregation and distribution network

3:00 P.M.

8. CLOSING REFLECTIONS & NEXT STEPS

Summary of key takeaways and announcements of upcoming events and opportunities to stay engaged.

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