



REGIONAL FOOD AGGREGATION & DISTRIBUTION SUMMIT:

Advancing Institutional Sourcing of Regionally Grown Foods

Hosted by the COG FARM Policy Committee's DMV Food Council Collaborative
& Regional Agricultural Work Group

December 16, 2025



Metropolitan Washington
Council of Governments

REGIONAL FOOD AGGREGATION & DISTRIBUTION SUMMIT

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Steve Bieber

Director, Water Resources Program, COG

Andrew Friedson

Councilmember, Montgomery County, Maryland and COG FARM Committee Chair

December 16, 2025



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About COG

- An independent, nonprofit association founded in 1957.
- Brings area leaders together to address regional issues and plan for the future.
- 300 elected officials from 24 local governments, the Maryland and Virginia state legislatures, and U.S. Congress, representing about 6 million residents.
- Home of the Transportation Planning Board, the region's Metropolitan Planning Organization.
- 125+ staff.





Food and Agriculture Regional Member (FARM) Policy Committee

Mission: To support development of long-term regional direction and collaboration toward a more resilient, secure, equitable, connected food and farm economy (food system) across Metropolitan Washington's urban, suburban, and rural communities to provide more of the region's food needs.



2025 REGIONAL FOOD AGGREGATION & DISTRIBUTION SUMMIT:

Summit Overview

Sydney Daigle
Regional Food Systems Consultant,
FARM Policy Committee, COG

December 16, 2025



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Summit Planning Committee

- Many thanks to the members that planned today's summit:
 - **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
 - **Kashaf Momin**, Policy Analyst, DC Office of Planning
 - **Caron Gremont**, Director, Food System Resiliency & Innovation, FRESHFARM
 - **Lauren DeSimone**, Director, Food Systems Development, Locus
 - **Grace Leatherman**, Executive Director, Future Harvest
 - **Natalia Salazar**, Ag Business Development Specialist, MoCo Office of Agriculture
 - **Elisa Solomon**, Project Coordinator, Fairfax Food Council



2024 Regional Food Aggregation and Distribution Summit



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Summit Resource Folder

- Access relevant resources through the QR Code or at this link: <https://bit.ly/3Mzesjt>
- Folder resources include:
 - Summit Agenda
 - Speaker Bios
 - Speaker Presentation Slides
 - Summary of 2024 Regional Food Aggregation and Distribution Summit Learnings



Paired Introductions

- Find someone near you that you don't know well.
- Take a minute each to answer this prompt:
 - Share your name, role, and organization
 - One concrete barrier your institution or sector faces in values-based procurement (e.g., budget, contracting, timing, scale, distribution)
 - One practical ask or offer (a tool, contact, practice, or partnership) you're seeking or willing to share today



Plow and Stars Farm 2019, Montgomery County, MD
(Lindsay Smith)

2025 REGIONAL FOOD AGGREGATION & DISTRIBUTION SUMMIT:

KEYNOTE: The Power and Potential of Regional Procurement

Alice Chalmers
Senior Advisor, Chesapeake Agriculture Innovation Center

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2025 REGIONAL FOOD AGGREGATION & DISTRIBUTION SUMMIT:

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

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Tabletop Talks

- Conference Room 3: **Getting Ahead of the Curve: Forward-Planning Guidance and Success Stories**
 - Amy Zerante, Farm to School Account Manager, 4P Foods
- Conference Room 1: **Harvesting Success: Connecting Students and Community Through Local Food Procurement**
 - Jason Tepper, Executive Chef, School Nutrition, Alexandria City Public Schools
- Main Room: **Meeting the Mark: Maryland's 20% Local Food Institutional Food Sourcing Requirement**
 - Stephanie Lansing, Professor, University of Maryland & Co-Chair, MD Food System Resilience Council
 - Karen Fedor, Administrator, Farm and Foods Program, MD Department of Agriculture
- Collaborating Space: **Workforce Matters: Centering Labor as a Values-Based Procurement Strategy**
 - Nezahualcoyotl Xiuhtecutli, Sr. Grassroots Advocacy Coordinator National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition

Breakout Sessions

- Main Room: **Innovative Contracting Models and Procurement Strategies**
- Conference Room 3: **Policy & Legislative Advocacy for Local Procurement**
- Conference Room 1: **Technology & Resource Sharing**