



## 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

Virtual Meeting (10 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.)

Registration:

<https://events.teams.microsoft.com/event/89fa7882-7f85-47b0-90e3-fb3dfc3c787f@dc508cfa-4cfb-4b61-ac4d-0c43aceb0e43>

#### 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.

## AGENDA

- 9:30 A.M.            REGISTRATION & NETWORKING**
- Coffee, tea, and light snacks
  - Informal networking
- 10:00 A.M.    1. WELCOME**  
*Andrew Friedson, Councilmember, Montgomery County, Maryland and COG FARM Committee Chair*
- Opening remarks and new [FARM Policy Committee](#) initiative
- 10:05 A.M.    2. SUMMIT OVERVIEW**  
*Sydney Daigle, Regional Food Systems Consultant, COG FARM Committee*
- Review of summit goals and expected outcomes
  - Overview of event resources
  - Paired introductions
- 10:30 A.M.    3. KEYNOTE: 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 .

Reasonable accommodations are provided upon request, including alternative formats of meeting materials.  
Visit [www.mwco.org/accommodations](http://www.mwco.org/accommodations) or call (202) 962-3300 or (202) 962-3213 (TDD).

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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:

- **Getting Ahead of the Curve: Forward-Planning Guidance and Success Stories**  
*Amy Zerante, Farm to School Account Manager, 4P Foods*  
Conference Room 3
- **Harvesting Success: Connecting Students and Community Through Local Food Procurement**  
*Jason Tepper, Executive Chef, School Nutrition, Alexandria City Public Schools*  
Conference Room 1
- **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, Administrator, Administrator, Farm and Foods Program, Maryland Department of Agriculture*  
Main Room
- **Successes and Opportunities to Build Wealth with Black and Brown-Owned Businesses from Field to Market** (*working title*)  
*Lester Franklin, Procurement Manager, Dreaming Out Loud, Inc.*  
Main Room
- **Workforce Matters: Centering Labor as a Values-Based Procurement Strategy**  
*Nezahualcoyotl Xiuhtecutili, Sr. Grassroots Advocacy Coordinator National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition*  
Collaborating Space

2:10 P.M.

## 7. BREAKOUT SESSIONS: DEVELOPING COLLABORATIVE SOLUTIONS

- Participants select one of the following focus areas:
  - **Innovative Contracting Models and Procurement Strategies** (Main Room)
  - **Policy & Legislative Advocacy for Local Procurement** (Conference Room 3)
  - **Technology & Resource Sharing** (Conference Room 1)
- All sessions will include strategies to map stakeholders and strengthen the region's aggregation and distribution network

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**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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