

Resolution No.: 20-1071
Introduced: March 10, 2026
Adopted: March 24, 2026

**COUNTY COUNCIL
FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND**

Lead Sponsor: Councilmember Andrew Friedson
Co-Sponsors: Council President Fani-González, Councilmember Stewart, Council Vice President Balcombe, Councilmembers Mink, Luedtke, Glass, Evans, Jawando and Sayles

SUBJECT: Resolution to Support the Council of Government’s Local Food Procurement Challenge

Background

1. Economic and social challenges, such as fluctuations in funding for essential programs, changes in market conditions, and ongoing pressures on household purchasing power, can place significant strain on vulnerable residents, the institutions that serve them, and agricultural producers.
2. Locally and regionally sourced food is generally fresher, more nutrient-dense, and of higher quality than food transported over long distances and often has a longer shelf life. Procuring food from local and regional producers also reduces environmental impacts by minimizing transportation distances (“food miles”) and related emissions. These factors collectively support improved health and wellness outcomes for residents, particularly individuals served through public institutions and social service programs.
3. Local governments can play a crucial role in maintaining and strengthening the vital connections between regional food producers and its consumers, businesses, and public institutions, and meeting the demand for locally-grown products from institutions, such as schools, hospitals, and state agencies, that are required by [Maryland legislation](#) to attempt to purchase at least 20 percent of food from locally grown or harvested sources through the [Certified Local Farm and Fish Program \(CLFF\)](#), established in 2023.
4. Montgomery County launched the Office of Food Systems Resilience (OFSR) under Bill 20-22 in July 2022 to streamline and coordinate the County’s efforts to address local food system challenges. The OFSR develops and implements interagency budgetary, regulatory, and operational strategies to build a more equitable, efficient, resilient, and sustainable food system in Montgomery County that can withstand and rapidly recover from food system disruptions, stresses, and changes. The OFSR collaborates with partners within Montgomery County to improve the health of its residents, economy, and natural

resources, including through quarterly convenings with more than 90 representatives from over 35 County agencies, as well as partners regionally including through the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) and the Maryland Food System Resiliency Council, to connect locally grown and raised food products to local market channels.

5. Through investing in initiatives such as the Farm to Food Bank Program, Community FarmShare, and the recently established Local Food Aggregator Grant Program and prioritizing local food purchases through numerous grant programs administered by the OFSR, Montgomery County seeks to sustain the viability of table crop farmers, watermen, and food producers – particularly local and regional producers – as this is essential for the economic vitality, resilience, and food security of the County and the wider metropolitan Washington region.
6. Leveraging future institutional procurement expenditures at the municipal, County, and state levels to support local and regional food systems is a strategic and flexible approach to strengthen local economies and advance environmental sustainability, and aligns with the County’s strategy for strengthening the local food system by simultaneously scaling investments that expand food production capacity by County farms, increasing market demand and opportunities, and amplifying value-chain coordination and infrastructure.
7. The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments’ Food and Agriculture Regional Member Policy Committee (the “FARM Committee”) has issued a Local Food Procurement Challenge (the “Challenge”) inviting member jurisdictions to formally commit to annually assess and identify opportunities to increase their local and regional food purchases.

Action

The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland approves the following resolution:

- Section 1.** Montgomery County formally joins the FARM Committee’s Local Food Procurement Challenge, expressing its intent to engage in the assessment, tracking, and strategic increase of local and regional food procurement across relevant departments and agencies.
- Section 2.** The County Executive will designate an Office of Food Systems Resilience representative to serve as the official Local Food Investment Point Person (the “Point Person”) within 60 days of passage of resolution. This individual shall be responsible for coordinating internal implementation efforts, acting as the primary liaison with the Challenge partners, and ensuring the timely collection and submission of procurement data necessary for tracking progress.

Section 3. All County departments are encouraged to analyze current food purchasing practices and to identify specific investment opportunities to incorporate local and regional food system priorities into current and future grants, policy initiatives, discretionary purchases, contracts, bids, and Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for food and food services. For the Challenge, regional foods are defined as a product produced from a grower in Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maryland, New Jersey, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Virginia, or West Virginia and local foods are defined as a product produced from a grower in the District of Columbia, Maryland, or Virginia. Whenever possible, products shall be sourced that minimize the distance between production and consumption.

Section 4. The Point Person and County staff from agencies that directly or indirectly fund the purchase of food as well as are encouraged to actively participate in the MWCOG Local Food Procurement Community of Practice to share experiences, learn about best practices in local procurement, and access necessary technical assistance to ensure successful implementation of this Resolution.

Section 5. The Point Person shall provide an update on Montgomery County's progress in the Challenge to the County Council no later than one year after this resolution is adopted.

This is a correct copy of Council action.



Sara R. Tenenbaum
Clerk of the Council