

Update on the Maryland Food System Resiliency Council and Related Items

Steve McHenry, Executive Director, MARBIDCO

Presentation for the Maryland Rural Summit

12/1/2021

“MARBIDCO”

MD Ag and Resource-Based Industry Development Corporation



MARBIDCO
*growing rural ventures*SM

- ❖ MARBIDCO is a quasi-public entity authorized to:
 - ☐ 1) Help develop food/feed/fiber production and processing businesses;
 - ☐ 2) Assist with rural working land preservation efforts; and
 - ☐ 3) Alleviate the shortage of nontraditional capital and credit available to farmers and other RBI businesses at affordable interest rates.

- ❖ MARBIDCO is a very nimble financial intermediary organization that **“works at the speed of business”** to assist commercial farming, forestry and seafood enterprises. MARBIDCO has funded more than 1,035 Ag/RBI projects over the last 14 years totaling nearly \$78 million.

- ❖ MARBIDCO offers **17 financial programs** today, often working in conjunction with commercial lenders and/or partnering with other agencies. Most of these are lower interest rate loan programs, but MARBIDCO does provide a few small incentive grants for targeted activities as resources permit (e.g., on-farm value added processing). MARBIDCO also offers the Next Generation Farmland Acquisition Program (which assists Beginner Farmers and helps to also preserve farmland at the same time). Also, partner on the MMM Program.

Certified Local Farm Enterprise Program

- Program is within the **Maryland Department of Agriculture**.
- State agencies, including public four-year universities, are encouraged to achieve an **overall goal of purchasing 20%** of their food from certified local farm enterprises.
 - [2021 HB 1488/SB 985](#)
- A **certified local farm enterprise** is a farm that has a nutrient management plan with the Maryland Department of Agriculture.
- [Directory of Certified Local Farm Enterprises](#) are on MDA's website. Approximately, 40 farms are listed on the Directory.
- Directory will be moved to Maryland's OneStop this month.
- Contact Karen Fedor, karen.fedor@maryland.gov for more information on the program.



Local Farm Enterprise Food Aggregation Grant Program



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- Purpose:
 - Support the development of a local food aggregation infrastructure to meet wholesale and institutional market demand for locally produced food products
 - Support the State's new procurement goal of purchasing 20% local food
 - Create opportunities for small farmers to sell products to wholesale and institutional markets
 - Demonstrate how the investment of funds can help to grow and strengthen Maryland's local food system
 - Requires the participation of a least 3 Certified Local Farm Enterprises/
- Funding of \$435,000 available each fiscal year through FY 2025.
- Application deadline for the FY 2022 program is February 11th. At least \$500,000 will be available this year.
- Contact Stacy Kubofcik, skubofcik@marbidco.org, for more information on the program.

Background - Food System Resiliency Council

- Established by **House Bill 831/Senate Bill 723 – Maryland Food System Resiliency Council**
 - *Sponsors: Senator Katie Fry Hester (D - 9: Carroll, Howard Counties), Delegate Lorig Charkoudian (D - 20: Montgomery County)*
- Added to the Public Safety Article, Title 14 (Emergency Management)

1 AN ACT concerning
2 **Maryland Food System Resiliency Council**
3 FOR the purpose of establishing the Maryland Food System Resiliency Council; providing
4 for the composition, co-chairs, co-vice chairs, and staffing of the Council; providing
5 that a member of the Council may not receive compensation but may be reimbursed
6 for certain expenses; authorizing the Council to establish certain subcommittees;
7 specifying the duties of the Council; requiring the Council to submit certain reports
8 to the General Assembly on or before certain dates; making this Act an emergency
9 measure; defining certain terms; and generally relating to the Maryland Food
10 System Resiliency Council.
11 BY adding to
12 Article – Public Safety
13 Section 14–1101 through 14–1103 to be under the new subtitle “Subtitle 11.
14 Maryland Food System Resiliency Council”
15 Annotated Code of Maryland
16 (2018 Replacement Volume and 2020 Supplement)
17 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
18 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Council Structure

Co-Chairs
MDEM Secretary
Food Council Rep
(Elected)

Russell Strickland (MDEM)
Heather Bruskin (Montgomery
Co. Food Council)

Co-Vice Chair
Secretary of
Agriculture

Rep: Mark Powell

Co-Vice Chair
Secretary of
Human Services

Rep: Michelle Williams

Co-Vice Chair
Dean of University of
Maryland
College of Ag &
Natural Resources

Rep: Stephanie Lansing,
Ph.D

Council Membership

Dept. of Emergency Management	Maryland Farm Bureau	Harry R. Hughes Center for Agro-Ecology	Racial equity in food system policy expert
Maryland State Senate	Maryland Agriculture & Resource Based Industry Development Corporation	Public School System	Food system impacts on climate change and environment expert
Maryland House of Delegates	University of Maryland College of Agricultural and Natural Resources	Statewide food security advocacy organization	Food nutrition and public health expert
Dept. of Human Services	Food Council Member (5)	Farmer	*University of Maryland Eastern Shore Extension
Dept. of Agriculture	University of Maryland Extension	Food business owner	*Maryland State Department of Education
Dept. of Commerce	University of Maryland Eastern Shore Small Farm Program	Food system policy expert	*Maryland Food Bank *Capital Area Food Bank

Council Deliverables

November 1, 2021: Interim Report to the Maryland General Assembly on key findings and activities

November 1, 2022: Report to Maryland General Assembly with recommendations for long term structure for a statewide food policy council

November 1, 2023: Report to the Maryland General Assembly on key findings and activities undertaken by the Council.

Goals

1. Address the **food insecurity crisis** in the State resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting economic crisis
2. Develop **equity and sustainability policy recommendations** to increase the long-term resiliency of the food system
3. Expand the impact of existing **food council organizations**
4. Develop a **strategic plan to increase the production and procurement** of Maryland certified food

Council Objectives

GOAL 1 - Address the food insecurity crisis in the State resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting economic crisis by:

1A: Coordinating state and local level food insecurity services to support residents of the state

1B: Tracking and analyzing data to create a comprehensive map of food insecurity across the state and identify gaps in service

1C: Leveraging federal and private sector grants and other resources in order to address food insecurity needs

1D: Advising the state on how best to allocate resources and increase efficiency

1E.1: Exploring the role of and potential use for the federal community eligibility provision to ensure all students in the state are fed

1E.2: Making recommendations to the Maryland State Department of Education and the Maryland General Assembly to implement relevant findings

Council Objectives

GOAL 2: Develop equity and sustainability policy recommendations to increase the long-term resiliency of the food system including:

2A: Addressing and eliminating racial inequalities in the food system

2B: Addressing and eliminating diet-related public health disparities

2C: Addressing and eliminating food deserts

2D: Reducing food waste, increasing recycling, and encouraging other relevant environmental impacts

Council Objectives

GOAL 3: Expand the impact of existing food council organizations by:

3A: Providing coordination and facilitation of knowledge exchange at the state level

3B: Supporting identification and application of grants to operating funds to support existing and new food council organizations as needed

Council Objectives

GOAL 4: Develop a strategic plan to increase the production and procurement of Maryland certified food, including:

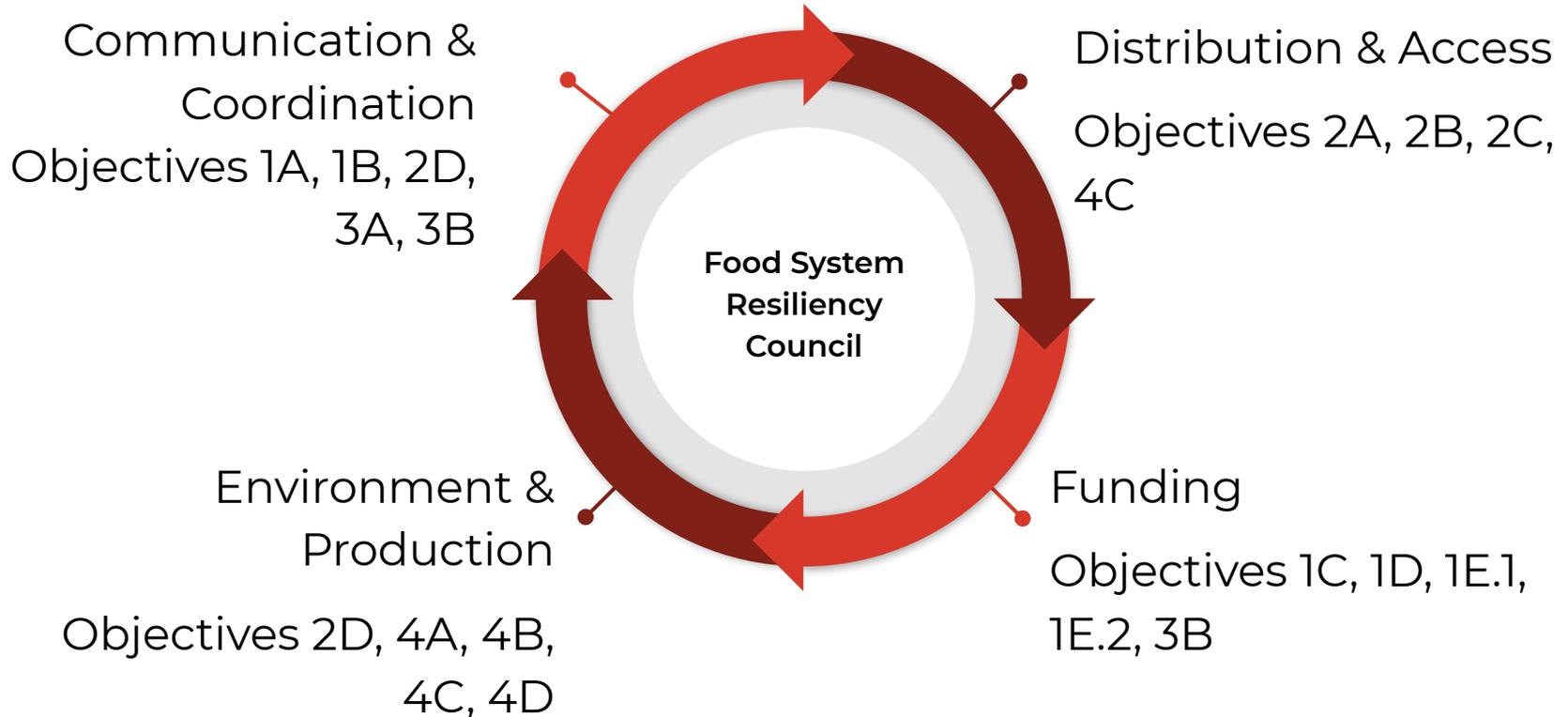
4A: Increasing the quality and quantity of production as well as aggregation, marketing, and distribution of local food in urban, suburban, and rural settings

4B: Increasing procurement of local food through schools, universities and other institutions

4C: Creating additional market opportunities for Maryland food businesses

4D: Expanding access to small scale manufacturing and food production infrastructure

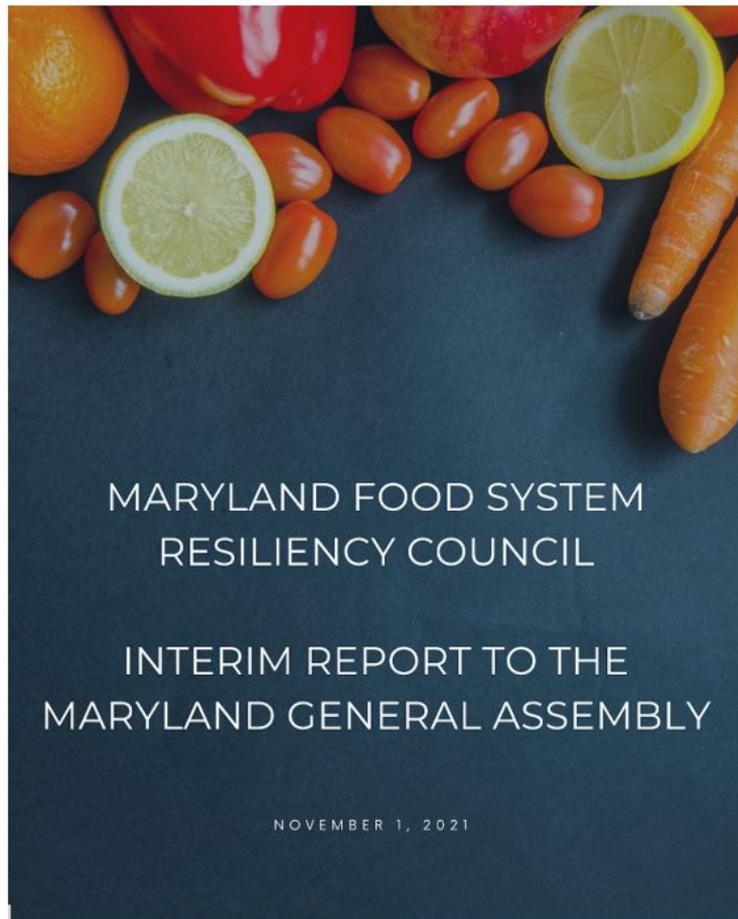
Subcommittee Structure



<p>Communication & Coordination</p> <p>1A: Coordinating state and local level food insecurity services to support residents of the state</p> <p>1B: Tracking and analyzing data to create a comprehensive map of food insecurity across the state and identify gaps in service</p> <p>2D: Reducing food waste, increasing recycling, and encouraging other relevant environmental impacts</p> <p>3A: Providing coordination and facilitation of knowledge exchange at the state level</p> <p>3B: Supporting identification and application of grants to operating funds to support existing and new food council organizations as needed</p>	<p>Environment & Production</p> <p>2D: Reducing food waste, increasing recycling, and encouraging other relevant environmental impacts</p> <p>4A: Increasing the quality and quantity of production as well as aggregation, marketing, and distribution of local food in urban, suburban, and rural settings</p> <p>4B: Increasing procurement of local food through schools, universities and other institutions</p> <p>4C: Creating additional market opportunities for Maryland food businesses</p> <p>4D: Expanding access to small scale manufacturing and food production infrastructure</p>
<p>Equity in Distribution & Access</p> <p>2A: Addressing and eliminating racial inequalities in the food system</p> <p>2B: Addressing and eliminating diet-related public health disparities</p> <p>2C: Addressing and eliminating food deserts</p> <p>4C: Creating additional market opportunities for Maryland food businesses</p>	<p>Funding</p> <p>1C: Leveraging federal and private sector grants and other resources in order to address food insecurity needs</p> <p>1D: Advising the state on how best to allocate resources and increase efficiency</p> <p>1E.1: Exploring the role of and potential use for the federal community eligibility provision to ensure all students in the state are fed</p> <p>1E.2: Making recommendations to the Maryland State Department of Education and the Maryland General Assembly to implement relevant findings</p> <p>3B: Supporting identification and application of grants to operating funds to support existing and new food council organizations as needed</p>

November 2021 Report

- **16 recommendations across all four goals**
- Acknowledged complex challenges like food equity and climate change need additional dialogue
- Unanimously passed among voting members (excluding the State agency representatives)
- Drafted by MDEM staff based on subcommittee direction



Goal 1 Recommendations

1.1: Establish a statewide food system map

1.2: Integration of non-congregate feeding capabilities into emergency management plans

1.3: Establish state contracts for widespread non-congregate emergency feeding needs

1.4: Establish Maryland Food and Agriculture Resilience Mechanism (FARM) program

Goal 1 Recommendations (cont)

1.5: Fund an Office of Resilience to include Chief Resilience Officer and support staff for the Food System Resiliency Council

1.6: Encourage State government to integrate social safety net programs to enable better access for Marylanders

1.7 Conduct an assessment of existing Federal and State food system grants, programs, and resources and analyze gaps in Maryland's participation in the available opportunities

1.8: Evaluate food system metric best practices and collaborate with State government to better understand existing performance metrics for food system-related spending

Goal 2

Recommendations

2.1: Allocate funding to increase the cold storage capacity across the state to meet immediate needs. Complete an assessment of existing cold storage resources in the state to better understand current resources to address gaps in the future.

2.2: Expand and modernize use of food benefits, including Maryland Market Money and EBT.

Goal 3

Recommendations

3.1: Establish a state-grant funded program for food council start-up, sustainment, and expansion costs.

Goal 4 Recommendations

4.1: Provide incentives to encourage Maryland school systems to purchase Maryland food.

4.2: Increase access to and use of technology to create and modify platforms to connect producers directly with consumers.

4.3: Diversify opportunities for small- and mid-scale producers.

4.4: Support statewide, regional, and local incentives or one-time grant programs to increase the number of food waste sites. Provide complementary technical assistance to local or regional entities to establish private sector or local government food waste programs.

4.5: Increase education on source separation of food waste and possibilities for on-farm composting/digestion.

Next Steps

- Focus on addressing systems issues including, but not limited to,
 - ongoing impacts of COVID-19 on food production, distribution, and access for Marylanders;
 - equity across the food system; and
 - mitigating and preparing for climate change impacts
- Report due November 2022 to include recommendations on the future of the Food System Resiliency Council

Highlighted Items in the Report (for me)

- 1: Establish the Maryland Food and Agricultural Resilience Mechanism (**FARM**) program at MDA at up to \$10 million annually.
- 2: At least double the **Maryland Farms and Families Grant Fund** program (MDA) which is currently set at \$100,000 annually. This is the source of State funding for **Maryland Market Money** (MMM) program (which is jointly run by MARBIDCO and SMADC/TCCSMD).
- 3: Fund MARBIDCO's (former RELIEF Act-funded) **Livestock Equipment Grants Program** at \$750,000 annually for at least two more years to help reduce the livestock processing backlog by increasing prod. capacity.
- 4: Expand the new **Urban Agriculture Grant Fund** Program (which currently is a Baltimore-only program) to the rest of the State. [There is no funding yet.]

Anticipated 2022 Legislation

- Delegate Lorig Charkoudian and Senator Katie Fry Hester are planning to sponsor legislation during the 2022 Legislative Session to, beginning in FY 2024:
 - Triple the annual funding for the Farms and Families Grant Fund to **\$300,000** (for the Maryland Market Money Program)
 - Fund the Maryland Food and Agricultural Resilience Mechanism (FARM) program (at MDA) at **\$1,250,000** annually
 - Establish and fund on a pilot basis the Maryland Farm-to-School Meal Grant Program at **\$500,000** for FY 2024 and FY 2025
 - Will provide a 20-cents per meal served with local food incentive in the participating school districts

Thank you for your kind attention today!
I will be pleased to try to answer any questions.



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