

January 24, 2020

UVA's Morven Farm,
Albemarle County

VIRGINIA FARM TO UNIVERSITY FORUM REPORT



Virginia Peach Orchard

Sponsored by:
UVA's Sustainable Food Strategy
Task Force (SFSTF)
Virginia Cooperative Extension
UVA Dining

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BACKGROUND

The Farm to University Forum was held on Friday, January 24, 2020 at the University of Virginia (UVA) Morven Farm in Albemarle County. It was sponsored by UVA's Sustainable Food Strategy Task Force (SFSTF), Virginia Cooperative Extension, and UVA Dining. Virginia Cooperative Extension's participation was supported by a USDA Agricultural Marketing Service Local Food Promotion Program grant to facilitate and enhance value chain connections across Virginia. The Forum was attended by 66 participants representing a range of interests, including university dining services, local food distributors, state agencies, support organizations, university sustainability offices, and university faculty and students.

Forum Goal: How can Virginia Universities Better Support Virginia's Food and Agriculture Economy?

To obtain higher yield in student recruitment, many Virginia universities put significant effort into increasing their sustainability. To track sustainability, most are using the independent Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS). AASHE STARS is a transparent, self-reporting framework for colleges and universities to measure their sustainability performance. In this system, institutions receive points when their Food & Beverage purchases meet certain criteria. Many local products meet these specifications including sustainability certifications, fresh product categories, and short supply chains.

In addition, many of Virginia's college and universities are committed to creating opportunities for small businesses in a variety of ways. The Virginia Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity certify small business that can then be further classified as micro, women-owned, minority-owned or veteran owned or SWaM. Many small farms across the Commonwealth meet the criteria to be SWaM certified. [Executive Order No. 35](#) signed by Governor Ralph Northam sets a target for state agencies to procure 42% from certified small businesses. This creates a huge market opportunity for our farms and food businesses to supply dining operations at state institutions. Virginia's public universities collectively report their procurement from SWaM vendors through the VA Association of State College & University Purchasing Professionals (VASCUPP). VASCUPP reports provide an opportunity to capture data and metrics regarding local food expenditures.

These policies bolster recommendations made in the [Virginia Farm to Table Plan](#) to increase opportunities for institutional procurement of local farm products. In Virginia, the agriculture industry contributes to 9.5% of the Commonwealth's GDP. According to the National Agricultural Statistics Service, the average farm size in Virginia is 181 acres. These mid-sized, family-owned farms that provide a plethora of jobs also control a majority of the land use. Improving the viability of these small farms would help maintain the region's diversity and employment outlook.

These farm businesses and related jobs are at risk due to a crisis of agriculture of the middle. According to the 2012 USDA census, less than 16 cents of every dollar spent on food actually goes to the farmer. Marketing directly to consumers and value chains allows producers to capture more of that food dollar and build capacity. Many of the small and midsized food businesses in our region lack the economies of scale to compete in price and volume with larger farms. A commitment from Virginia's universities to buy locally would provide a consistent market for small businesses. This newly realized market would allow the

regional food value chain to achieve economies of scale and invest in infrastructure that makes local, healthy foods more accessible to all.

Specific Questions the Forum Will Address:

- How can we facilitate university procurement of Virginia-produced foods?
- How can we increase procurement of Virginia-produced foods from SWaM-certified businesses?
- How can university dining operations achieve economies of scale?

FORUM PRESENTATIONS

OPENING REMARKS

The Forum opened with a welcoming reception and presentations by Associate Professor of Politics at UVA, Paul Freedman. He introduced the overall goal for the Forum: strategizing ways in which Virginia Universities can help build Virginia’s farms and food economy jobs. Freeman placed into context the significant amount of meals the universities represented at the Forum were serving per week. He argued



that if even a small portion of that large number was regularly and predictably sourced from Virginia farms, it would help the farmers make a living wage, support the growth of Virginia’s farming economy, attract new and young farmers, and create new and diverse food-related jobs. He emphasized the purpose of fostering inter-university collaboration with a focus on supporting Virginia’s farms and food economy throughout the Forum, hoping that people will leave with specific strategies that can be further explored.

French Price, Value Chain Coordinator, then provided a general introduction of the participants. She emphasized the large range of perspectives that the individuals and organizations represented at the Forum. This included producers and growers, distributors, support agencies, university dining, university sustainability, and university faculty. She briefed everyone on the agenda for the day and housekeeping notes.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE VIRGINIA FOOD SYSTEM, SECRETARY BETTINA RING

The Virginia Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry, Bettina Ring, was introduced and shared her background and experience in this field. One of her first jobs was to come to Morven Farm to inspect trees as a young forester. Now, her work involves supporting Governor Ralph Northam’s mission of building a strong Virginia economy in agriculture and forestry while also protecting the environment. Agriculture is the number one industry in the Commonwealth, with tourism ranking number two (including an important contribution of agritourism), and forestry number three. Together they combine to create a 91-billion-dollar industry, and a key part of Virginia’s economic engine and



opportunities. Secretary Ring identified barriers that need to be addressed to improve Virginia farm participation in Farm to School and Farm to University—such as storage, transportation, distribution, and contracts. She shared the goals of Governor Northam’s Children’s Cabinet, chaired by the First Lady, which wants to feature Virginia products in schools, eliminate hunger, and support food security. In spring 2019 at the Farm to School Conference, the Cabinet set a bold goal that Virginia’s Farm to School program would achieve \$22 million in purchases by 2022 (“22 by 22”). A [2018 report](#) by Virginia Tech and the Department of Education indicated that 50% of Virginia’s farmers are interested in participating in this initiative, and 12% have already been able to sell products schools. One key goal for Farm to School/University is that farmers must be able to get a fair price for their products. “It’s as much about the farm as it is about the school,” she emphasized. Secretary Ring urged Forum participants to address these issues more deeply and work to advance solutions that will enable universities to source food from local farms.

SETTING THE CONTEXT

CREATING A COMMON FRAMEWORK FOR PROBLEM-SOLVING, PAUL FREEDMAN



Paul Freedman gave an overview on the history of how the 4VA Universities started collaborating on their sustainable supply chain. The conversation started in May 2015 when a Sustainable Food Systems Symposium was organized to bring together faculty, dining coordinators, and sustainability people from 4VA schools – University of Virginia, George Mason University, James Madison University, and Virginia Tech. What resulted was the Virginia Sustainable Food Coalition. In the following years, the work of this coalition led to the establishment of the Sustainable Food Systems Task Force at the University of Virginia, which has developed the University’s first [Sustainable Food Action Plan](#). This group is again convening together through this Forum to continue to drive this conversation about university procurement of local foods.

AASHE STARS, BROOKE KINSEY & NINA MORRIS



To provide relevant context for the Forum discussions, a presentation about the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System (STARS) of the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) was given to the participants. Brooke Kinsey, Sustainability Coordinator at UVA Dining and Nina Morris, Sustainability Program Manager of Outreach and Engagement for the UVA Office for Sustainability showed how AASHE STARS can provide universities a

benchmark and progress tracking for sustainability dining goals because it has a common language. It is an open, accessible, and transparent resource available online. Kinsey and Morris explained that there are two main metrics for sustainability in dining services: OP-7: Sustainable Food Beverage Purchasing,



and OP-8: Sustainable Dining. Specifically, the Forum focused on OP-7 to talk about local food procurement. They revealed the new STARS 2.2 food and beverage purchasing criteria. The largest change was that local foods were not included in the qualifications to receive points. Instead, it shifted its focus on plant-based food in the new STARS 2.2 standards. Kinsey and Morris offered tips for both producers and institutions to use this tool. For the former, they recommended checking the list of certifications that STARS accepts as well as telling universities their story as it matters to students. For institutions, they believe AASHE STARS is a good way to educate themselves to inform decisions when working with distributors. They did point out that there is a lack of clarity about what counts in the standards because it is still new. They also mentioned that AASHE is open for recommendations and input. If the standards are not meeting the needs of the farming community, AASHE could reflect on that in their next batch of standards.

FLASH PRESENTATIONS

Before the participants were broken off to their group discussions, flash presentations were given by owners and founders of successful Virginia food procurement innovations and collaboration stories. The participants were able to engage in a Q&A after these flash talks. This exposure led to inquiries and hopefully sales for some of the producers.



Ryan Ford is owner of the [Seven Hills Food Co.](#), founded four years ago in Lynchburg, to wholesale premium pastured Virginia family farm raised Angus beef. Ford shared the story of how he was able to create a new product that is now served throughout University of Virginia dining halls. He met the director of UVA Dining at the December 2017 Higher Education Sustainable Food Supply Chain Symposium, and began a conversation about how to bring Seven Hills beef to UVA. Matt Smythe, director of UVA Dining, wanted to implement the James Beard Foundation “blended burger” to help achieve UVA’s Nitrogen-footprint reduction goals, as well as increase UVA’s score in AASHE STARS, two metrics important to the university’s sustainability goals. Working together, Ford and Smythe worked with the James Beard Foundation and Mushroom Association of America to get the right mix of meat and mushrooms (so that it didn’t taste like mushrooms). UVA Dining conducted double-blind tests with students, comparing the Blended Burger with 100% beef burgers. The results were so overwhelming in favor of the Blended Burger that UVA Dining no longer offers any 100% beef burgers, and at all of its locations offers only the Blended Burger.



Christine Huger is co-owner with her husband, Fred Huger, of the [Mountain View Farm Products, LLC](#), located in Fairfield, between Staunton and Lexington. Mountain View is a 250-acre year-round dairy farm housing around 200 cows (Jersey, Holstein, and cross-bred) which are pasture-rotationally grazed and receive non-GMO feeds. The dairy crafts raw milk, artisan cheeses that are aged 60 days as well as fresh, pasteurized products. Huger shared their beginnings and how they were able to buy the farm by working with the owner to put the farm in a conservation easement. They found the dairy business to be a roller coaster, and when they learned about the added value of artisanal cheese she took classes and created a cheese-making facility out of an old school trailer. Mountain View cheeses are now sold through seven distributors, and gained entry via the Local Food Hub to JMU Dining halls, where students are able to enjoy fresh grated and

sliced mozzarella in numerous recipes. The major challenge was to find a way to deliver fresh grated mozzarella, which is one of the largest ingredients consumed by dining halls. Starting with small batches using household kitchen appliances, Huger processed the cheeses by hand. Campus Dining chefs needed to tweak some recipes to accommodate for the fact that this fresh, local product did not have the same additives that other shredded cheese products use to prevent their cheese from sticking together. Once JMU's chefs were able to trial recipes, they committed to buying greater volumes. Huger was then able to invest in an industrial grade cheese processor to streamline her production and take on additional institutional accounts.



Elizabeth Raymond is co-founder with her sister and mother of The NoBull Burger, a company based in Charlottesville. The recipe for the NoBull Burger was created by her mother, who sought to feed her family a healthier version of a burger and who became known through the years as “the veggieburger lady.” As vegan foods became more popular, her mother was convinced to set up shop in 2011 with her two daughters. A graduate of UVA, Raymond wanted to enable students to have access to their product. They were able to gain access to UVA through the Local Food Hub, and they also work with Sysco and a variety of other local food distributors that have enabled them to provide the NoBull Burger also to JMU and John Hopkins University, as well as retail venues like Wegmans and Whole Foods. The key to their success is understanding that millennials are making a shift to plant-based foods, and care about where their food is coming from, which is creating a demand for their product. Raymond is seeking to replicate the success of what they've been able to do at UVA with other universities.



Kate Zuckerman is co-owner with her husband, Ethan Zuckerman, of Blue Ridge Bucha, a company founded in 2010 in Waynesboro, in Virginia's Blue Ridge Mountains. Their business began with a desire to both reduce waste and provide kombucha directly to customers by using growlers that customers can refill. By offering their product on tap, they have saved 1 million 12-oz bottles with their no-waste model. Because the business is family-owned and self-financed, their growth has been slow. In 2017, the Zuckermans started working with UVA Dining, and connected with the student-led group, Green to Grounds, to offer their product to students. Meeting with success at UVA enabled them to work with JMU. Their goal is to continue expanding to other universities across the state. They have expanded their relationship with university students by attending the Careers and Young Networking Events, as well as other tabling events, and speaking with students about careers in this industry. As a business they have consciously started recruiting students for part-time work. The challenges of running the business may prevent them from realizing opportunities, such as the potential advantage of becoming a SWaM-certified business – which they did not realize until invited to speak at this event. They are now in the process of doing the paperwork for certification. Advice to others includes telling their story, as the story matters to students; gaining student advocates on the campus, as a cold-call to dining services is extremely difficult; and plan for the fluctuations in product needed due to the seasonality of the academic calendar, with gaps in both winter and summer. Exclusivity contracts are a barrier, as some of large carbonated soda companies require that no other beverage producers can sell products on campuses. Zuckerman asked if universities could cooperate, to share experiences and connect each other to small producers?

FORUM PROCESS

After all the presentations, Forum participants were divided into three separate discussion groups focusing on three different topic areas: (1) University procurement of Virginia-produced foods, (2) Procurement of Virginia-produced foods from SWaM-certified businesses, and (3) Economies of scale by dining operations. Prior to the Forum, research was conducted to provide relevant information on the topics the participants discussed. Group 1 was provided a handout of food profiles on select food to show how they would be scored under the new STARS 2.2 standards. Group 2 was supplemented with a handout on state-based policies from other states that incentive local procurement to give participants recommendations and ideas on how they can translate into university procurement of Virginia foods. Group 3 was not given any additional handouts or resources for their discussions. The handouts were used as a resource for participants to productively and accurately engage in the discussions. They can be found in Appendix E and F.

The participants were pre-assigned the order in which they will rotate through the Discussion groups; everyone would have the opportunity to participate in each topic area before coming back together to report the results. The first round was the longest where they lay the foundation for the rest of the discussions. After the first round, participants rotated to the next group, briefed on what was developed and refined the ideas. Then, the participants rotated to their final round and again briefed on what was developed to help refine those ideas. During each round, facilitators were tasked with filling in flip charts to document the ideas expressed by the participants. When the carousel rotation was over, the facilitators summarize the discussions with next steps and who can move the ideas forward. The participants are rounded together at the end to discuss the highlights and flip charts of each group.



GROUP DISCUSSION

COMMON CONCERNS AND CHALLENGES

After the separate group discussions, the participants convened together to review their discussions to find common concerns and challenges. One issue that was brought forth by many people was the lack of clarity on SWaM businesses. This includes what it is, who qualifies, how to get certified, and where to find these businesses. They mentioned that there seems to be no existing way to recognize SWaM businesses. While there are databases available, they are hard to filter and identify farms and food producers efficiently. Another challenge brought forth was understanding AASHE STARS standards. Because the criteria is constantly changing, many participants struggled to learn the new standards. STARS 2.2 especially frustrated many local producers and farmers expressed they were unhappy with the transition of the criteria from local focus to plant-based focus.

EXISTING RESOURCES TO SUPPORT UNIVERSITY PROCUREMENT OF VIRGINIA FOODS

- **Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE)** is a partnership of Virginia Tech and Virginia State University that exists to connect research and knowledge with the public to create more viable communities. The agency has staff in each county of the Commonwealth to connect local farms with statewide initiatives. Extension specialists conduct research and create programs to coordinate connections across the food value chain. Collaboration across sectors and organizations within the food system is facilitated by the **Center for Food Systems and Community Transformation**
- **Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS)** promotes the economic growth and development of Virginia's agriculture industry by marketing products domestically and internationally. VDACS manages two statewide branding programs including **Virginia Grown**, for products grown and raised in the Commonwealth and **Virginia's Finest**, for value-added products made within the state.
- **Virginia MarketMaker** is a tool provided by Virginia Cooperative Extension, Virginia Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services and Farm Credit of Virginias. This is a master database of Virginia's farms and food businesses. The searchable map feature allows buyers to seek suppliers based on product specifications.
- **Local Food Hub** is a non-profit organization based in Charlottesville, VA. For over 10 years, Local Food Hub has facilitated the sale of local farm products to wholesale buyers like schools and universities. Local Food Hub is committed to
- [Virginia Association of State College & University Purchasing Professionals \(VASCUPP\)](#) is a network of procurement offices from 11 of the Commonwealth's public four-year institutions. VASCUPP members collectively report their expenditures and cooperatively share contracts.
- [Virginia Sustainability in Higher Education Consortium \(VASHE\)](#) is a network of sustainability professionals for colleges and universities across the state. The VASHE network has periodic calls to share best practices across universities.

IDEAS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR ADVANCING UNIVERSITY PROCUREMENT OF VIRGINIA FOODS

The participants talked through ways to advance university procurement of local foods. One idea suggested was to build language into university contracts to require a minimum purchase of SWaM-certified businesses. This was a popular suggestion in the economies of scales group discussions. Participants were unaware that there is already requirement for state agency contracts over \$100,000 to have a SWaM subcontractor on record. However, this is clearly not enforced or followed through effectively so there could be efforts to be put in place to address the lack of enforceability. The participants were also in favor of expanding these requirements to include local sourcing of food.

In response to the challenge of SWaM businesses being unknown, participants discussed the idea of creating an up-to-date directory of SWaM-certified vendors. A few mentioned that it was a possible opportunity for MarketMaker to serve as a master database that cross references with Virginia Grown, Virginia's Finest, and SWaM. Similarly, a small group of participants brought forth the idea of creating a webinar or website that included all information on university procurement of Virginia foods. This would be a one-stop shop to learn about AASHE STARS standards, SWaM businesses and certifications, marketing resources, and more. It can include a direct link to the master database on SWaM-certified businesses as well.

A common suggestion made by higher education participants was to include students in these conversations. Students are becoming increasingly interested and aware of the local sourcing of foods. Round 1 participants of the procurement of Virginia-produced foods from SWaM-certified businesses group discussion were especially interested in student engagement. They believe that students can apply significant pressure to university administration, but to do so, faculty need to be encouraged to develop relevant curriculum and build these issues into course content. Along with that, participants were enthusiastic about marketing and communications campaign to educate students in dining halls about the foods they are eating and the importance of local and SWaM businesses.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: FORUM AGENDA

AGENDA

- 9:00** **Registration and Networking Reception**
- 9:30** **Welcome, Forum Goals, Agenda Review, Introductions**
- Tanya Denckla Cobb, UVA Sustainable Food Strategy Task Force, and UVA Institute for Engagement & Negotiation
 - French Price, Virginia Cooperative Extension
- 9:40** **Farm to University: Opportunities for the Virginia Food System**
- Bettina Ring, Virginia Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry
- 10:00** **Creating a Common Framework for Problem-Solving**
- What Has Happened Since the 2017 University Sustainable Supply Chain Symposium?
 - Paul Freedman, Professor of Politics, University of Virginia
 - What is AASHE STARS, and why are U.S. Universities Using This?
 - Brooke Kinsey, Sustainability Coordinator, UVA Dining
 - Nina Morris, Program Manager of Outreach and Engagement, UVA Office of Sustainability
 - Successful Virginia Food Procurement Innovations and Collaborations/ Stories– Flash Presentations
 - The Blended Burger: Ryan Ford, Owner, Seven Hills Food Co
 - Artisan Cheese: Christie Huger, Owner, Mountain View Farm Products, LLC
 - No Bull Burger: Elizabeth Raymond, Co-Founder, No Bull
 - Blue Ridge Bucha: Kate Zuckerman, Owner and Chief Cultural Officer
 - Q/A – Discussion
- 11:00** **Break/ Participants Move to Small Groups**
- 11:15** **Collaborative Problem-Solving Discussions**
Three Concurrent Facilitated Discussions in Theatre, Solarium, Meeting Room
- **Group 1: How can we facilitate university procurement of Virginia-produced foods by increasing the availability of those that meet the criteria in the [AASHE STARS Technical Manual 2.2 \(Op7, p180\)](#)? (Theatre)**
 - **Group 2: How can we increase procurement of Virginia-produced foods from SWaM-certified businesses by university dining operations? (Solarium)**
 - **Group 3: How can university dining operations achieve economies of scale by creating opportunities for combined university purchasing? (Meeting room)**

Round 1 Discussion: *Facilitator guides group through discussion and brainstorming, reality-testing, prioritizing, identifying possible partners (including , next actions – outcomes are posted on flip charts for review*

12:15 **Lunch**

12:55 **Round 2 Discussion** - *People rotate to another group, are briefed on what was developed, refine ideas, add to/help prioritize partners and actions*

1:20 **Rotate to Round 3**

1:30 **Round 3 Discussion** - *People rotate to last group, are briefed on what was developed, refine ideas, add to/help prioritize partners and actions*

1:45 **Gallery Walk** – *People are able to review the strategies created by the three discussion groups.*

2:00 **Large group discussion:** highlights from each group; partners and next steps; next steps

Closing – next steps, discoveries, insights, inspirations

2:30 **Adjourn**

Depart for 3:00 Field Trip to 4P Foods / Local Food Hub

Warehouse address: 556 Dettor Rd #108, Charlottesville, VA 22903

APPENDIX B: THREE GROUP DISCUSSION REPORTS

Group 1 Key Question:

How can we streamline university procurement of Virginia-grown foods?

Top Strategies

1. Support local producers – Facilitate information dissemination to producers, establish directories (and utilize existing resources like [Virginia Grown](#) & [Virginia's Finest](#) directories) that connect producers to each other and also to opportunities like connecting with the Universities.
2. Host a webinar on [AASHE STARS 2.2](#). Host an event with procurement to help them understand the need for local products in University contracts.
3. Value local producers – Advocate for local products within AASHE, sustainability threshold in University contracts, minimum established at the state level (like Vermont's). Research best practices from states that have the minimum already.
4. Push for a statewide alliance – Collaboration in a way that allows producers greater access to the Universities as a whole (instead of individually), advocate for change to state regulations (like the minimum).

Who needs to be involved as partners?

- [Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services](#) (VDACS) – Has a voluntary listing of growers on the Virginia Grown website
- Virginia Cooperative Extension – [MarketMaker](#) database
- [FeedVA](#) – Farm to school directory
- Local food network – Small nodes should become bigger portions of a larger university-wide network
- Statewide alliance of colleges/universities (to be created)

Next steps

- Enhance the VDACS Virginia Grown and Virginia's Finest directories to help connect producers and University procurement
- Webinar on AASHE STARS 2.2
- Get procurement and producers together
- Research best state practices nation-wide; expand current summary of [Farm to Institution New England study](#)

Group 2 Key Question:

How can we increase procurement of Virginia-produced foods from SWaM-certified business?

Top Strategies

1. Contracts – Incentivize and pressure on suppliers to involve Small, Women and Minority owned (SWaM), minimum content requirements with support from VDACS.
2. Data collection and distribution to better track and disseminate information about SWaM business through a centralized tracking system/database.
3. Capacity Building for producers – Provide information to producers about [SWaM certification](#) and qualifications. Support with eVA registration/SWaM certification process.

Who needs to be involved as partners?

- Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) – See what funding is available to help processors get started
- Virginia Cooperative Extension – Potential partner for marketing workshop
- [VSU Small Farm Outreach Program](#) – Potential partner for marketing workshop
- [VA Dept. of Small Business and Supplier Diversity](#) (SBSD) – [Database online](#) to find local certified SWaM suppliers
- [eVA](#) – Virginia’s eProcurement marketplace
- [MarketMaker](#) – Database to keep track of local producers with certain certifications

Who is willing to be involved in implementation team?

- French Price, Virginia Tech & Virginia Cooperative Extension
- Conaway Haskins, Virginia Tech & Virginia Cooperative Extension

Next steps

- Use Virginia Cooperative Extension [Market Ready program](#); create Farm to University Training Program for producers
- Contract development through [Virginia Association of State College and University of Purchasing Professionals](#) (VASCUPPS) to research if any universities have language in contracts to incentivize local, small-business or sustainable food procurement
- Create a way to share data and marketing about small, local food businesses in one location
- Educating about SWaM and [executive order](#) to ALL parties

Any other key comments/ notes

Additional strategies include:

- Student and faculty engagement/pressure
- Liability insurance
- Marketing/branding SWaM as a movement and SWaM producers

Group 3 Key Question:

How can university dining operations achieve economies of scale?

Top 3 Strategies

1. Conduct research into policy differential of local and economic opportunities.
2. “Just do it!” – Use a pilot project of committing to an all-local dish that all universities can make and later use it for data (e.g. All-Local Taco Tuesday).
3. Local food dialogue with universities, distributors, dining service companies, and other stakeholders to frame share values.

Who needs to be involved as partners?

- Local Food Hub to host a site
- UVA Sustainable Food Strategies Task Force (UVA SFSTF) as a model for coalition (composed of dining, sustainability, faculty, students, and *community liaisons)
- [Virginia Association of State College and University Purchasing Professionals](#) (VASCUPPS) and [Council of Independent Colleges in Virginia](#) (CICV)

Who is willing to be involved in implementation team?

- Molly Harris, VA FAIRS (K-12 portal)

Next steps

- Establish Universities coalition with one representative from each university on monthly call (need a steering committee to keep it moving)
- Work toward a central website through learning from the K-12 portal being built
- Use research programs like [Virginia Food Systems Leadership Institute](#) (VFSLI) to gather data on how universities can justify or afford local food procurement versus current supply chain

Any other key comments/ notes

Additional strategy include:

- Aligned marketing and communications campaign to students, parents, legislators, etc.

APPENDIX C: FORUM PARTICIPANTS

Kelly Altizer

Associate
Institute for Engagement & Negotiation
kaltizer@virginia.edu

Jason Aupied

Resident District Manager
W&M Dining Services
jcaupied@wm.edu

Eric S. Bendfeldt

Extension Specialist, Community Viability and Food Systems
Virginia Tech/Virginia Cooperative Extension Center for Food Systems and Community Transformation
ebendfel@vt.edu

Blake Bensman

Sustainability Manager
Virginia Tech Dining Services and Housing & Residence Life
bensman@vt.edu

Brent Beringer

Executive Director
Aramark – JMU Dining
beringer-brent@aramark.com

Maureen McNamara Best

Director
Local Environmental Agriculture Project (LEAP)
maureen@leapforlocalfood.org

Tyler Betzhold

Executive Chef of Campus Dining
University of Richmond
tbetzhol@richmond.edu

Tanya Denckla Cobb

Director
Institute for Engagement & Negotiation

Portia Boggs

Director of Advancement and Communications
Local Food Hub
portia@localfoodhub.org

Ryan Bowyer

Dean of Students
Emory & Henry College
rbowyer@ehc.edu

Jewel Bronaugh

Commissioner
VDACS
jewel.bronaugh@vdasc.virginia.gov

Laura Brown

Director of Community and Policy
Local Food Hub
laura@localfoodhub.org

Dan Budi

Director Retail Sales
Produce Source Partners
dbudi@webpsp.com

Ed Davis

Professor, and Chair, Presidents Climate Working Group
Emory & Henry College
ehdavis@ehc.edu

Cynthia Chiles

Partner
Crown Orchard
cynthia@crownorchard.com

Rebecca Deeds

Program Director
Morven
rld8n@virginia.edu

td6n@virginia.edu

Corey DiLuciano

Senior Food and Nutrition Director

UVA Health

Cd8nt@virginia.edu

Tara Eavey

Director of Procurement

4P Foods

tara@4pfoods.com

Ryan Ford

President

Seven Hills Food

rford@sevenhillsfood.com

Paul Freedman

Associate Professor

University of Virginia

freedman@virginia.edu

Sierra Gladfelter

Program Manager

Institute for Engagement & Negotiation

Sg6us@virginia.edu

Basil Gooden

iCubed Visiting Scholar

Virginia Commonwealth University

basil@vt.edu

Alison Haniffee

Contract Sales Manager

Sysco Food Services of Virginia

haniffee.alison@va.syscho.com

Molly Harris

Project Manager

VA FAIRS

molly.harris@vafb.com

Brooke Kinsey

Regional Sustainability Director

Aramark

kinsey-brooke@aramark.com

Eden Harris

Association Director of Licensing, Administration and Marketing

William & Mary

erharris@wm.edu

Lea Harvey

Director of Strategic Initiatives, Foundations, and Corporate Relations

Sweet Briar College

lharvey@sbc.edu

Conaway Haskins

Extension Specialist – Economic Development

Virginia Tech

chaskins@vt.edu

Les Haughton

Director Supplier Diversity

UVA Health

lh7sn@virginia.edu

Heidi Hertz

Assistant Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry

Governor's Office

heidi.hertz@governor.virginia.gov

Barrett Hightower

Operations Officer

Common Grain Alliance

barrett.hightower@gmail.com

Christie Huger

Owner

Mountain View Farm Products, LLC

drnkmlk2@yahoo.com

Rose Jeter

Sales and Marketing Manager

Homestead Creamery, Inc

rose@homesteadcreameryinc.com

Andy Kerscher

Production Manager/Chef

Sam Lev

Director, Program and Operations
Leap – Local Environmental Agriculture Project
sam@leapforlocalfood.org

Caitlin Lundquist

Sustainability Coordinator
Sodexo – GMU
caitlin.lundquist@sodexo.com

Sydney Mathis

Intern
Institute for Engagement & Negotiation
smm6uu@virginia.edu

Tom McDougall

Founder
4P Foods
tom@4pfoods.com

Stephanie Meyers

Morven Kitchen Garden
Farm Manager
scm6x@virginia.edu

Caitlin Miller

Marketing Specialist
Virginia Department of Agriculture
caitlin.miller@vdacs.virginia.va

Ryan Miller

Associate Director of Dining Services
Washington and Lee University
rmiller@wlu.edu

Nina Morris

Sustainability Program Manager, Outreach & Engagement
University of Virginia
nmm3a@virginia.edu

Secretary Bettina Ring

Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry

University of Richmond – Dining Services
akersche@richmond.edu

Steve Moyer

Operations Manager
William & Mary Dining
stephen.moyer@sodexo.com

Courtney Mustin

Business Services Manager
Virginia Dept of Small Business & Supplier Diversity
courtney.mustin@sbsd.virginia.gov

Kim Niewolny

Associate Professor
Virginia Tech
niewolny@vt.edu

Robert Patton

District Executive Chef
Aramark at Old Dominion University
rpattton@odu.edu

Nicole Poulin

Campus Garden Manager
Washington & Lee University
npoulin@wlu.edu

Lisa Powell

Director of the Center for Human and Environmental Sustainability & Associate Professor of Environmental Studies
Sweet Briar College
lpowell@sbc.edu

French Price

Value Chain Coordinator
Virginia Cooperative Extension
frenchprice@vt.edu

Crissanne Raymond

Cofounder
NoBull Burger
crissanne@nobullburger.com

Governor's Office

bettina.ring@governor.virginia.gov

Ben Rosenberger

Sustainability Coordinator

JMU Dining Services

rosenberger-benjamin@aramark.com

Chris Schilling

Director – Specialty Supply Chain

Aramark Specialty Supply Chain

schilling-chris@aramark.com

Diane Small

Produce Merchandising Manager

Sysco Virginia

small.diane@va.sysco.com

Grace Summers

Small Farm Management Agent

Virginia State University

gsummers@hotmail.com

Karin Taylor

Manager of the Office of Promotions

Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS)

karin.taylor@vdacs.virginia.gov

Charlie Touchette

Consultant

Crown Orchard

charlie@whiteloafridge.com

Andrea Trimble

Sustainability Director

University of Virginia

art2k@virginia.edu

Emily Tucker

Local Food Sales Manager

4P Foods

emily@4pfoods.com

Elizabeth Raymond

Cofounder

NoBull Burger

elizabeth@nobullburger.com

Crystal Tyler-Mackey

Extension Specialist

Virginia Cooperative Extension / Virginia Tech

cmt Tyler@vt.edu

Dean Wadel

Founder

Wadel's Farm Wagon

wadelsfarmwagon@yahoo.com

Sam Walker

General Manger, Dining Services

Emory & Henry College

swalker@ehc.edu

Kristina Weaver

Associate Director

Institute for Engagement & Negotiation

knw6y@virginia.edu

Yuki Zheng

Intern

Institute for Engagement & Negotiation

yz3pz@virginia.edu

Kate Zuckerman

Co-Founder & Co-Owner

Blue Ridge Bucha

kate@blueridgebucha.com

APPENDIX D: AASHE STARS PRESENTATION

AASHE STARS 2.2

How setting a common food purchasing standard encourages sustainable food systems in Virginia

Outline

- Why UVA uses the STARS Food & Beverage Purchasing standards
- What factors contribute to STARS points: Ex: UVA Dining
- What are the new Food & Beverage Purchasing Standards
- How buyers can help institutions like UVA meet its sustainable food goals
- How can providers help institutions know if their products meet STARS' food standards



UVA Food Service Providers

- 1) Darden Dining (Flik, Compass Group)
- 2) UVA Dining (Aramark)
- 3) UVA Health System (Morrison Healthcare, Compass Group)

Why AASHE STARS

- International Standard that provides:
 - Transparency
 - Accountability
 - Goal Setting



2020-2030 GOALS

Serving our Community & the Environment

1. Be carbon neutral by 2030 and fossil fuel free by 2050
2. Achieve the "30 by 30" goals by 2030 (relative to 2010 levels)
 - Reduce water use and reactive nitrogen losses by 30%
 - Reduce our waste footprint to 30%
 - Increase sustainable food purchases to 30% by 2030
3. Partner with our community to accelerate collaborative initiatives to advance sustainable, equitable, and healthy places for all
4. Ethical sustainability-focused research and curriculum



Points explained: UVA

8.6%
Sustainable Food under AASHE 2.1 (2017 data)

Point Drivers:

- Fair Trade coffee/tea program
- Local products from Local Food Hub (now 4P), PSP, Sysco
- Monterey Bay Seafood- Best Choice + Good Alternative
- American Humane Certified Products

STARS Food & Beverage *new* Purchasing Criteria

Institution's dining services purchase food and beverage products that meet at least one of the following criteria:

<p>Sustainably or ethically produced as determined by one or more of the standards listed in Standards and Terms.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Certified Organic ○ Fair Trade ○ Humane Products 	<p>Plant-based</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Unprocessed/minimally processed foods: <i>fruits, vegetables, whole grains</i> ○ Processed culinary ingredients derived from nature: <i>vegetable oils, vinegar</i> ○ Vegetarian/vegan alternative to meat and dairy: <i>plant-based milks/meat substitutes</i>
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Institution Affirmed Production-exempted from certification

An exemption from the certification/verification requirement is granted to producers who are engaged in sustainable production, but for whom certification is either not accessible or not cost effective (e.g., campus farms and gardens and small producers). To qualify, ALL of the following criteria must be met:

- 1) The product is single-ingredient (e.g., apples, coffee, or fish).
- 2) The product is sourced through a short food supply chain (SFSC) that provides full traceability from identified farms, boats, or harvesters to the institution.
- 3) The institution is able to affirm (e.g., through site visits or documentation from the producer or intermediary) that the production methods used are consistent with the principles of organic agriculture articulated in IFOAM COROS, the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, OR the 10 principles of fair trade adopted by the World Fair Trade Organization (WFTO).

Tips for Producers

- If financially viable, consider getting a third-party certification that qualifies for STARS points
- Ensure buyers know what certifications you currently have/plan to pursue

Meat	AGA-Certified Grassfed, American Humane Certified, Animal Welfare Approved, Certified Humane Raised and Handled
Produce	Certified Organic, Biodynamic Certified, Regenerative Organic Certified, American National Standard for Sustainable Agriculture, USDA Transitional Organic, Food Alliance Certified
Seafood	Marine Stewardship Council blue ecolabel, Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch: best choice or good alternative
Dairy	Milk with Dignity
All/Labor Related	Fair Trade, Equitable Food Initiative Certified, Fair Food Program, Food Justice Certified

Tips for Institutions

- Familiarize yourself with AASHE 2.2 standards
- Work with distributors to capture spend on qualifying local purchases
- When considering what products to purchase, prioritize products that qualify for STARS points
- If your campus reports to STARS, find the STARS contact listed on your school's report (if you don't know them already) and connect about getting points for sustainable food purchases

Questions?

APPENDIX E: FOOD PROFILE/AASHE HANDOUT

VIRGINIA FARM TO UNIVERSITY FORUM

UVA's Morven Farm, Albemarle County

January 24, 2019

How Virginia Foods can Meet AASHE Stars Criteria

Beef

<u>AASHE Standards (for food and beverage purchasing, OP 7)</u>	Definitions:
<i>Plant-Based Foods</i>	Defined as “fruits and vegetables (produce); whole grains; beans, other legumes (pulses), and soy foods; nuts and seeds; plant oils; and herbs and spices”, simple combinations of these foods and their derivatives, and vegetarian/vegan alternatives to meat and dairy
<i>Sustainably or Ethically Produced</i>	A food or beverage product must meet one or more of the following standards for sustainable agriculture, sustainable seafood, fair trade/labor, humane animal care

To qualify for AASHE Stars 2.2 criteria:

Meet at least one of the following standards under "sustainably or ethically produced":

- AGA-Certified Grassfed
- Animal Welfare Approved (A Greener World)
- Biodynamic Certified (Demeter)
- Buying Poultry (Best Choices and Better Choices)
- Certified Humane Raised and Handled
- Certified Naturally Grown
- Food Alliance Certified
- Global Animal Partnership Certified (Step 2 or above)
- NOFA-NY or PCO Certified 100% Grassfed
- Regenerative Organic Certified
- USDA Certified Organic

If your enterprise is small-scale (not structurally dependent on permanent hired labor) and operating within a short food supply chain (ideally, no more than one intermediary between the farm and the customer), meat or poultry may also qualify if you can demonstrate to the institutional buyer that the production methods used are consistent with the [principles of organic agriculture](#).

Chicken

<u>AASHE Standards (for food and beverage purchasing, OP 7)</u>	Definitions:
<i>Plant-Based Foods</i>	Defined as “fruits and vegetables (produce); whole grains; beans, other legumes (pulses), and soy foods; nuts and seeds; plant oils; and herbs and spices”, simple combinations of these foods and their derivatives, and vegetarian/vegan alternatives to meat and dairy
<i>Sustainably or Ethically Produced</i>	A food or beverage product must meet one or more of the following standards for sustainable agriculture, sustainable seafood, fair trade/labor, humane animal care

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- AGA-Certified Grassfed
- Animal Welfare Approved (A Greener World)
- Biodynamic Certified (Demeter)
- Buying Poultry (Best Choices and Better Choices)
- Certified Humane Raised and Handled
- Certified Naturally Grown
- Food Alliance Certified
- Global Animal Partnership Certified (Step 2 or above)
- NOFA-NY or PCO Certified 100% Grassfed
- Regenerative Organic Certified
- USDA Certified Organic

If your enterprise is small-scale (not structurally dependent on permanent hired labor) and operating within a short food supply chain (ideally, no more than one intermediary between the farm and the customer), meat or poultry may also qualify if you can demonstrate to the institutional buyer that the production methods used are consistent with the [principles of organic agriculture](#).

Eggs

<u>AASHE Standards (for food and beverage purchasing, OP 7)</u>	Definitions:
<i>Plant-Based Foods</i>	Defined as “fruits and vegetables (produce); whole grains; beans, other legumes (pulses), and soy foods; nuts and seeds; plant oils; and herbs and spices”, simple combinations of these foods and their derivatives, and vegetarian/vegan alternatives to meat and dairy
<i>Sustainably or Ethically Produced</i>	A food or beverage product must meet one or more of the following standards for sustainable agriculture, sustainable seafood, fair trade/labor, humane animal care

To qualify for AASHE Stars 2.2 criteria:

Meet at least one of the following standards under "sustainably or ethically produced":

- American Humane Certified (Laying Hens - Free Range and Pasture only)
- Animal Welfare Approved (A Greener World)
- Biodynamic Certified (Demeter)
- Buying Poultry (Best Choices and Better Choices)
- Certified Humane Raised and Handled
- Global Animal Partnership Certified (Step 2 or above)
- Regenerative Organic Certified
- USDA Certified Organic

If your enterprise is small-scale (not structurally dependent on permanent hired labor) and operating within a short food supply chain (ideally, no more than one intermediary between the farm and the customer), eggs may also qualify if you can demonstrate to the institutional buyer that the production methods used are consistent with the [principles of organic agriculture](#).

Cheese

<u>AASHE Standards (for food and beverage purchasing, OP 7)</u>	Definitions:
<i>Plant-Based Foods</i>	Defined as “fruits and vegetables (produce); whole grains; beans, other legumes (pulses), and soy foods; nuts and seeds; plant oils; and herbs and spices”, simple combinations of these foods and their derivatives, and vegetarian/vegan alternatives to meat and dairy
<i>Sustainably or Ethically Produced</i>	A food or beverage product must meet one or more of the following standards for sustainable agriculture, sustainable seafood, fair trade/labor, humane animal care

To qualify for AASHE Stars 2.2 criteria:

Meet at least one of the following standards under "sustainably or ethically produced":

- AGA-Certified Grassfed
- Animal Welfare Approved (A Greener World)
- Biodynamic Certified (Demeter)
- Certified Humane Raised and Handled
- Food Alliance Certified
- Milk with Dignity (Migrant Justice)
- NOFA-NY or PCO Certified 100% Grassfed
- Regenerative Organic Certified
- USDA Certified Organic

If your enterprise is small-scale (not structurally dependent on permanent hired labor) and operating within a short food supply chain (ideally, no more than one intermediary between the farm and the customer), dairy products may also qualify if you can demonstrate to the institutional buyer that the production methods used are consistent with the [principles of organic agriculture](#).

Tomatoes

<u>AASHE Standards (for food and beverage purchasing, OP 7)</u>	Definitions:
<i>Plant-Based Foods</i>	Defined as “fruits and vegetables (produce); whole grains; beans, other legumes (pulses), and soy foods; nuts and seeds; plant oils; and herbs and spices”, simple combinations of these foods and their derivatives, and vegetarian/vegan alternatives to meat and dairy
<i>Sustainably or Ethically Produced</i>	A food or beverage product must meet one or more of the following standards for sustainable agriculture, sustainable seafood, fair trade/labor, humane animal care

To qualify for AASHE STARS 2.2 criteria:

Produce automatically earns points as plant-based food

Additional points by meeting at least one of the following standards under "sustainably or ethically produced":

- American National Standard for Sustainable Agriculture (ANSI/LEO-4000) (Silver or higher)
- Bee Better Certified (Xerces Society)
- Biodynamic Certified (Demeter)
- Certified Naturally Grown
- Certified Sustainably Grown (SCS)
- Equitable Food Initiative certified
- Fair Food Program (Fair Food Standards Council / Coalition of Immokalee Workers)
- Food Alliance Certified
- Food Justice Certified (Agricultural Justice Project)
- Protected Harvest Certified
- Rainforest Alliance Certified (Sustainable Agriculture SAN Standard)
- Regenerative Organic Certified
- USDA Certified Organic

If your enterprise is small-scale (not structurally dependent on permanent hired labor) and operating within a short food supply chain (ideally, no more than one intermediary between the farm and the customer), produce may also qualify if you can demonstrate to the institutional buyer that the production methods used are consistent with the [principles of organic agriculture](#).

Apples

AASHE Standards (for food and beverage purchasing, OP 7)	Definitions:
<i>Plant-Based Foods</i>	Defined as “fruits and vegetables (produce); whole grains; beans, other legumes (pulses), and soy foods; nuts and seeds; plant oils; and herbs and spices”, simple combinations of these foods and their derivatives, and vegetarian/vegan alternatives to meat and dairy
<i>Sustainably or Ethically Produced</i>	A food or beverage product must meet one or more of the following standards for sustainable agriculture, sustainable seafood, fair trade/labor, humane animal care

To qualify for AASHE STARS 2.2 criteria:

Produce automatically earns points as plant-based food

Additional points by meeting at least one of the following standards under "sustainably or ethically produced":

- American National Standard for Sustainable Agriculture (ANSI/LEO-4000) (Silver or higher)
- Bee Better Certified (Xerces Society)
- Biodynamic Certified (Demeter)
- Certified Naturally Grown
- Certified Sustainably Grown (SCS)
- Equitable Food Initiative certified
- Fair Food Program (Fair Food Standards Council / Coalition of Immokalee Workers)
- Food Alliance Certified
- Food Justice Certified (Agricultural Justice Project)

- Protected Harvest Certified
- Rainforest Alliance Certified (Sustainable Agriculture SAN Standard)
- Regenerative Organic Certified
- USDA Certified Organic

If your enterprise is small-scale (not structurally dependent on permanent hired labor) and operating within a short food supply chain (ideally, no more than one intermediary between the farm and the customer), produce may also qualify if you can demonstrate to the institutional buyer that the production methods used are consistent with the [principles of organic agriculture](#)

Leafy Salad Greens

AASHE Standards (for food and beverage purchasing, OP 7)	Definitions:
<i>Plant-Based Foods</i>	Defined as “fruits and vegetables (produce); whole grains; beans, other legumes (pulses), and soy foods; nuts and seeds; plant oils; and herbs and spices”, simple combinations of these foods and their derivatives, and vegetarian/vegan alternatives to meat and dairy
<i>Sustainably or Ethically Produced</i>	A food or beverage product must meet one or more of the following standards for sustainable agriculture, sustainable seafood, fair trade/labor, humane animal care

To qualify for AASHE STARS 2.2 criteria:

Produce automatically earns points as plant-based food

Additional points by meeting at least one of the following standards under "sustainably or ethically produced":

- American National Standard for Sustainable Agriculture (ANSI/LEO-4000) (Silver or higher)
- Bee Better Certified (Xerces Society)
- Biodynamic Certified (Demeter)
- Certified Naturally Grown
- Certified Sustainably Grown (SCS)

- Equitable Food Initiative certified
- Fair Food Program (Fair Food Standards Council / Coalition of Immokalee Workers)
- Food Alliance Certified
- Food Justice Certified (Agricultural Justice Project)
- Protected Harvest Certified
- Rainforest Alliance Certified (Sustainable Agriculture SAN Standard)
- Regenerative Organic Certified
- USDA Certified Organic

If your enterprise is small-scale (not structurally dependent on permanent hired labor) and operating within a short food supply chain (ideally, no more than one intermediary between the farm and the customer), produce may also qualify if you can demonstrate to the institutional buyer that the production methods used are consistent with the [principles of organic agriculture](#).

VIRGINIA FARM TO UNIVERSITY FORUM

UVA's Morven Farm, Albemarle County

January 24, 2019

State Policies that Incentivize University Procurement of Virginia Foods

Sources of Information:

- [*Regional Trends in New England Farm to Institution Procurement Policy 2019 Report*](#)
- Chesapeake Foodshed Network
 - Christy Gabbard, 1/15/2020
- California Department of Food and Agriculture [website](#)

State-based Policies

Purchasing Preferences	<p>Requires procurement officers to in some way prefer locally produced food over products grown outside the state</p>
	<p>Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Massachusetts requires state agencies to purchase a Massachusetts-grown product if that product is within <i>10 percent of the price</i> of a product grown outside the state - Vermont requires state agencies to select Vermont food products when available and when <i>“other considerations [are] equal”</i> between in-state and out-of-state products
	<p>Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Require the institution to purchase a certain percentage of products locally each year - Specify a means for tracking and evaluation to better enable an assessment of their effectiveness
Small Purchase Thresholds	<p>Creates an opportunity for institutional purchasers to move or forgo standard procurement regulations for purchases under a specified dollar amount. The reduced time and effort required for these smaller purchases may also incentivize procurement officials to make more small purchases, which could result in an overall increase in spending on local food</p>
	<p>Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Massachusetts’s threshold allows local government bodies, including school districts, to purchase up to \$35,000 of agricultural products grown in the state without soliciting multiple price quotes - Connecticut’s threshold waives the competitive bidding process for purchases of \$10,000 or less
	<p>Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Thresholds should be set at the highest dollar amount feasible - Increase micro- and small-purchase thresholds for food purchases to align with or come closer to federal thresholds
Certified Local Farmer Enterprise Program	<p>Voluntary program that allows state institutions to contact local farms that meet certain environmental standards to help build relationships between farms and institutions</p>
Farm to School Programs	<p>Connects schools to local food producers by changing food purchasing and education practices. Degree of state government involvement varies, many operated by NGOs.</p>

	<p>Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - State governments to offer additional funding opportunities to support local food purchasing and preparation
<p>State Food Policy Council</p>	<p>Consists of representatives and stakeholders involved in local food procurement efforts who identify and propose ways to improve local and state food systems</p>
	<p>Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rhode Island’s council recommends and advocates for state food policy and work to create the necessary infrastructure to advance the state’s food system - Connecticut’s council develop state food policy and comment on any proposed legislation or regulations in the state relating to food policy
	<p>Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have clear and specific mandates, concrete timelines, and a regular, public reporting process on their efforts
<p>Healthy Soil Incentives</p>	<p>Provide financial incentives to farmers who utilize a wide array of practices to build healthy soils</p>
	<p>Example</p> <p>California farmers are given financial incentives to implement conservation management practices</p>