

North Carolina Sustainable Local Food Advisory Council

2010 Annual Report

October 2010

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The North Carolina Sustainable Local Food Advisory Council (NCSLFAC) was established in August 2009. Its purpose, as mandated in NC G.S. 106-830, is “to contribute to building a local food economy, thereby benefiting North Carolina by creating jobs, stimulating statewide economic development, circulating money from local food sales within local communities, preserving open space, decreasing the use of fossil fuel and thus reducing carbon emissions, preserving and protecting the natural environment, increasing consumer access to fresh and nutritious foods, and providing greater security for all North Carolinians.”

The Council met four times in 2010: February 2, April 22, July 22 and September 9. The three Subcommittees of the Council met a total of nine times, and there were several additional meetings and conference calls of various working groups. A Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) working group, called to formation and action by the Chair of the Council, also met two times, and the members corresponded many times on the list serve in working on the details of the GAP pilot program.

Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler provided a number of staff to assist the Council, the Subcommittees and work groups. Additional program assistance was provided to the Council, the Subcommittees and work groups via funding from a Golden Leaf Foundation Local Foods Initiative grant secured by the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. The Department established a new Web page dedicated to the Council and created a listserve to facilitate information transfer among Council members.

The major items included in this, the first report of the Council, are recommendations to the General Assembly as charged in 106-833, and an account of the proceedings of the Council, Subcommittees and work groups.

The NCSLFAC recommends that the General Assembly establish through legislation the following:

- **Modify municipal annexation:** Require that no municipality may annex farm or forest land nor may any municipality regulate farming and forestry activities in their extra territorial jurisdiction if the land is within a voluntary agricultural district, enhanced voluntary agricultural district or is subject to a conservation easement designated to maintain property as “working lands”.
- **Fund ADFP for Military Support:** Provides additional financial match for the Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation (ADFP) Trust Fund above the FY 2010 funding level to work with military bases, training zones and other areas to protect the military presence in North Carolina and to protect the local food production on farmland in these designated areas.
- **NC Farm Transition Network (NCFTN) Support:** The NCDA&CS and North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service (NCCES) re-establish the NCFTN in partnership and:

- A new position provided to NCDA&CS to manage farmland transition activities within the ADFP Trust Fund; and
 - A new position provided to NCCES to manage educational and land-link activities; and,
 - Adequate funding for the 2 positions & program activities
- **Funding for NCSLFAC:** Recurring funding for Council staff and operating expenses should be provided to fully leverage the expertise and resources of the Council, Subcommittees and working groups. The Council recommends that a full-time organizational manager be based within the NCDA&CS to coordinate the work of the Council, follow up with members on commitments and represent the Council to various other organizations. The Council recommends and requests that staff would serve at the pleasure of the Council. Further, the Council recommends that input and direction from Council members should be core to the hiring process. In addition to a staff person, the Council recommends recurring monies for on-going Council operating expenses.
- **Establish a Liaison Position to the North Carolina Agricultural Task Force:** Name a member of the North Carolina Local Sustainable Foods Advisory Council as liaison to the North Carolina Agricultural Task Force (ATF) that is headquartered within the NCDENR Division of Soil & Water Conservation.
- **That NCDA&CS and NCSU should develop an All-Farm GAPs Pilot Program for Small Farmers:** Support the state's small and diversified fruit and vegetable farmers by working with the North Carolina Fresh Produce Safety Task Force and its partners to develop an All-Farm GAPs (Good Agricultural Practices) pilot program.
- **Continue Support of Farm To School:** Support the Farm to School Program that connects schools (K-12) and local farms and promote the objectives of serving healthy meals in school cafeterias, improving student nutrition, providing agriculture, health and nutrition education opportunities, and supporting local and regional farmers.
- **Continue to grow the USDA Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education (SNAP-ED)** This would include expanding social marketing, removing barriers to participation, nutritional education and inclusion of a local food component of the SNAP-ED program.
- **Plan for the Future of Electronics Benefit Transfer (EBT) and Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Programs:** Encourage efforts to reach more people with healthy food access and increasing revenue for more farmers. Provide support for farmers markets to purchase wireless electronic benefit transfer (EBT) devices and promote efforts for outreach and education programs that encourage residents of lower-income neighborhoods and SNAP-ED and WIC recipients to use farmers markets and farm stands.

BACKGROUND

The history of agriculture and local food systems in North Carolina, including the institutions and organizations that fostered them, is very long. Increasing citizen interest in local food production and consumption has strengthened attention to these areas over the past few years, and led to the recommendation for the creation of the NC Sustainable Local Food Advisory Council in 2009.

Nationally, the first Food Policy Council started in 1982 in Knoxville, Tennessee. Since then Food Policy Councils have been established at state, local and regional levels across the country. These Councils began as a way to address the food system as a whole, often bringing the weight of local, county or state government behind grassroots initiatives, a group of representatives and stakeholders from many sectors of the food system.

Councils generally have four functions:

- To serve as forums for discussing food issues,
- To foster coordination between sectors in the food system
- To evaluate and influence policy, and
- To launch or support programs and services that address local needs.

The concept of a Local Food Council is not new to North Carolina. In fact, from 2001 to 2003, North Carolina had a Council with membership from many of the same groups represented today. However, this initial Food Policy Council was funded through a grant received by Drake University in 2001 and because it lacked a legislative mandate, it was disbanded when the grant funds were expended.

Under the leadership of the Center for Environmental Farming Systems, renewed interest in the need for a viable Local Food Advisory Council began. Drs. Nancy Creamer and John O'Sullivan of the Center for Environmental Farming Systems provided this statement of the history, of the needs and the goals of North Carolina's sustainable local food economy in their introduction to the *"Farm to Fork, A Guide to Building North Carolina's Sustainable Local Food Economy."* (Curtis, Jennifer, et al. April 2010).

"Agriculture and fisheries are the foundations of our food system in North Carolina. Developing viable and lasting production systems to meet the consumption demands of a growing population and to confront challenging natural resource realities requires a multi-disciplinary approach that understands and is responsive to social, political and economic trends."

From the report's recommendation, working with many agricultural partners, a request for legislation to create the North Carolina Sustainable Local Food Advisory Council was made. After months of negotiations, on August 7, 2009, Senate Bill 1067 was ratified as AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE NORTH CAROLINA SUSTAINABLE LOCAL FOOD ADVISORY COUNCIL TO ADDRESS PROGRAM AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SUSTAINABLE LOCAL FOOD ECONOMY IN NORTH CAROLINA, beginning a new chapter in the local food movement in North Carolina.

COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

The NCSLFAC members were appointed in the winter of FY 2009-10. (*See Attachment B*) The following list provides the highlights of the four quarterly meetings that were held, fulfilling the statutory requirement for the year.

February 2, 2010: The Council held its first meeting in Raleigh and heard the following presentations:

- **“Local Food: NC Highlights”** - Dr. Richard C. Reich, Assistant Commissioner, NCDA&CS
- **A Farmer’s Perspective** – John Vollmer, Vollmer Farm
- **Council’s Purpose and Duties** – Joy Hicks, Policy Development Analyst, and Ray Starling, General Counsel, NCDA&CS

Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler was unanimously elected as the Chair of the Council, and Dr. Nancy Creamer, Director, Center for Environmental Farming Systems, was unanimously elected as Vice Chair.

April 22, 2010: The Council met in Raleigh and heard the following presentations:

- **Food Safety:** Debbie Hamrick, Director, Specialty Crops, NC Farm Bureau Federation
- **Statewide Action Guide:** Jennifer Curtis, Project Director, NC Choices, Center for Environmental Farming Systems
- **Farmland Preservation Update:** Dewitt Hardee, Program Manager, Agricultural Development Farmland Preservation Trust Fund (ADFP), NCDA&CS

Subcommittee guidelines were discussed and adopted. (*See Attachment C*) Three Subcommittees of the Council were established and Subcommittee Chairs elected:

- **Economic Development and Infrastructure:** Ms. Debbie Hamrick, Director, Specialty Crops, NC Farm Bureau Federation
- **Health, Wellness, Hunger and Food Access:** Dr. Alice Ammerman, Gillings School of Global Public Health, UNC-Chapel Hill
- **Land, People and Natural Resources:** Dr. Edwin J. Jones, Professor and Associate State Program Leader ANR/CRD, NCSU

The Council adopted a resolution supporting the Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund, requesting the North Carolina General Assembly appropriate \$5 million to further the purpose of the fund. (*See Attachment E*)

The resolution was delivered to the General Assembly.

July 22, 2010: The Council met in Raleigh and heard the following presentations:

- **Regulatory Issues of Animal Processing in North Carolina:** Donald H. Delozier, Director, Meat and Poultry Inspection Division, NCDA&CS
- **Local Foods and Economic Development Potential in NC: the Western North Carolina Example:** Charlie Jackson, Executive Director, The Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project (ASAP)
- **GAP Certification – A Farmer’s Perspective:** Joe Martin, [Zydeco Farm](#) and [New River Organic Growers](#)
- **Potential “Whole Farm” GAP Certification:** Dr. Ben Chapman, Assistant Professor and Extension Food Safety Specialist, NCSU
- **Southeastern N.C. Food Systems Project:** Dr. Leslie Hossfeld, Associate Professor, Public Sociology Program Director, UNC-Wilmington

September 9, 2010: The Council met in Fletcher and heard the following presentations:

- **Regional Local Food Council Input:** Aaron Newton, Cabarrus County Local Food System
- **How Local and County Governments Interface with Local Foods Businesses and Farms:** John Day, Cabarrus County Manager
- **WNC Regional Livestock Center:** L.T. Ward, WNC Communities
- **Financing Local Food Businesses and Farms:** Anna Tefft, NC Sr. Business Lender, Natural Capital Investment Fund

The Council also received and discussed recommendations from the individual Subcommittees for inclusion in the Annual Report. (*See Recommendations Section*)

SUBCOMMITTEE AND WORKING GROUP PROCEEDINGS

Three Subcommittees were established at the second meeting of the Council in April 2010 to create focus areas for further concentrated study. These Subcommittees each met at least twice. The following sections detail those meetings, along with the findings and recommendations.

Economic Development and Infrastructure:

At its initial meeting, the Subcommittee determined the need to establish working groups to provide more detailed activities on several fronts:

- Study Working Group: Chair Roland McReynolds, assigned G.S. 106-832 (4): In-depth analysis of potential impacts of production of sustainable local food on economic development.
- Regulation Working Group: Chair Ron Fish, assigned G.S. 106-832 (5) & (6): ID and development of solutions to statutory, regulatory and policy barriers.
- Literature Review Working Group: Chair Barry Nash: Using *From Farm to Fork* as the core document, identify documents and publications that members can determine items of interest for the Subcommittee that will forward the agenda of the Council.
- Infrastructure Working Group: Chair Debbie Hamrick: Work on issues surrounding financing, education, logistics, broad band, cold storage and others that can be brought before the Council.

In subsequent meetings, the Subcommittee concentrated on specific issues of importance to the Council and heard from a number of speakers who could address materials pertinent to the business of the Subcommittee working groups:

The Subcommittee heard presentations from two North Carolina regulatory agencies with oversight of various food laws: Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services Food and Drug Protection Division and Department of Environment and Natural Resources Divisions of Water Quality and Environmental Health. Presenters included:

- NCDA&CS Food and Drug Protection Division: Jim Melvin, Assistant Director for Regulatory Programs, and Anita MacMullan, Food Compliance Supervisor
- NCDENR: Coleen H. Sullins, Director, Division of Water Quality, and Mike Kelly, Deputy Director, and Larry Michael, Environmental Programs Supervisor, Food Protection Branch, Division of Environmental Health

Study Report: Roland McReynolds, working group chair, has met with Dr. Olha Sydorovych, Agricultural and Resource Economics, NC State University. Dr. Sydorovych is preparing a preliminary assessment of what a study for North Carolina would contain as well as a budget. Working group chair recommends that the Council review studies from other states and two publications from USDA ERS: *“Comparing the Structure, Size and Performance of Local and Mainstream Food Supply Chains”* and *“Local Food Systems: Concepts, Impacts and Issues.”*

Literature Review Report, Barry Nash, chair (absent), filling in was Charlie Jackson: The working group is collecting research-based reports from across North Carolina and from select communities along the eastern seaboard to learn what has and is being done to create successful local food economies. The goal is to review and recommend documents to the other working groups with the Economic Development & Infrastructure Subcommittee to evaluate in more depth. Progress: To date this working group has compiled nearly 30 assessments, and more are being collected.

At its September 9, 2010, meeting, the ED&I subcommittee approved a work plan for 2011:

Assess the Market

Develop a plan for conducting an in-depth analysis of the current and future economic impacts of production of sustainable local food.

- Develop parameters and a scope of work for an assessment of the impact of the current and future local food market.
- Identify sources of funding to conduct an assessment of the impact of the current and future local food market.
- Develop a timeline and action plan to conduct an assessment of the impact of the current and future local food market.
- Identify existing sources of data and survey resources that may be used to develop an assessment of the impact of the current and future local food market.

Facilitate Entrepreneurial Development

The Subcommittee determined that maintaining awareness of local foods businesses and farms is critical so the issues they face regarding regulations can be addressed. As many more farmers and businesses begin to produce value added crops and start food processing enterprises, they find a confusing regulatory framework that was built for larger scale businesses and farms or altogether unrelated businesses. Ensuring that small local foods businesses and farms are able to access local foods markets with value added, processed farm products is critical to their long-term success and can be an important source of job growth for North Carolina's rural economies. The working group will continue discussions with regulatory agencies to gain an understanding of hurdles to local food entrepreneurs and on-farm value added production and processing.

- Develop and maintain lines of communication with regulatory agencies that have jurisdictional authority for local foods businesses/farms to cultivate a proactive climate of cooperation
- Conduct outreach to local foods entrepreneurs and farmers to determine the most significant regulatory issues and hurdles they face
- Encourage development of regulatory guidance documents (such as "Requirements for the Producer/Grower 20,000 Poultry Exemption" issued in August 2010 by NCDA&CS Meat & Poultry Inspection Division) for various aspects of local foods businesses and on-farm value added production and processing.
- Work to develop and/or access a comprehensive regulatory reference so that local food business entrepreneurs and farmers may quickly surmise which regulations/governmental entities pertain to various types of local foods businesses/farms.

- Engage with the State of North Carolina Administration's efforts to boost small businesses through the Governor's Regulatory Reform Initiative by developing specific recommendations regarding regulatory reform for local foods businesses and farms.

Seek Guidance from Existing Resources

Conduct a literature review of existing studies and publications related to local foods in North Carolina that can be used to inform the Council's work and referenced by the public.

- Collect research-based reports from across North Carolina and from select communities along the Eastern Seaboard to learn what has and is being done to create successful local food economies
- Summarize each publication with bullets highlighting important conclusions and results
- Create an online catalog of the bibliographies with links to the publications on the Council website.

Build and Strengthen Local Foods Infrastructure

Build and strengthen the underlying foundation for local food systems in North Carolina by focusing on public and private infrastructure as a determinant of economic growth and job creation. Infrastructure may be hard or soft. For instance, hard infrastructure includes the physical network and capital investments that enable sustainable production and delivery of local food to markets. Soft infrastructure includes institutions and services that maintain the infrastructure network. Within this broad definition of Infrastructure, the first focus will be on distribution and processing infrastructure to help complete the distribution chain from farm to fork.

- Identify important aspects and critical issues of the existing local foods business and farming distribution and processing infrastructure.
- Isolate one to two critical issues within the existing local foods business and farming distribution and processing infrastructure and develop an action plan to positively address change.
- Support efforts to encourage local foods processing by state, federal or Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) agencies such as the NC Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, NC Department of Commerce, NC Rural Center, Advantage West and others.

The Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) Working Group: At the July 22, 2010, meeting of the Council, the Chair charged a group within the Council to form a GAP Working Group to meet and determine a strategy to deal with all the many issues facing North Carolina's farmers in meeting the growing demand surrounding certification and auditing under the various Good Agricultural Practices specified by the buyers in the marketplace.

At its August 10, 2010, meeting, the GAP Working Group established a goal to develop and test a model "whole farm" GAP program that allows small-scale, diversified farms to participate in institutional and wholesale markets for produce.

The plan was to work with farms participating in New River Organic Growers cooperative, which has identified an institutional buyer that wants to purchase the cooperative's products, and other small diversified farms to establish such a model program.

To achieve this goal, the development and testing of this model program must

- Be accepted by buyers
- Be effective in controlling produce safety risks
- Have a low cost of compliance for farms
- Ensure that record-keeping requirements for farms are consistent with the normal course of business operations
- Analyze the actual economic barriers to GAP audit participation for small diversified farms
- Analyze the actual production practice barriers to GAP audit participation by small diversified farms
- Analyze possible modifications of USDA GAP recommendations to accommodate small diversified farms' barriers to GAP audit participation
- Be easily adapted by small diversified farms
- Be easily adapted by organic farms
- Limit farm inspection to once per year
- Be accepted by public health agencies
- Identify potential obstacles to buyer acceptance of a whole farm GAP program

The target date for commencement of the program is January 2011, and it is expected to be a one-year program.

Drs. Ben Chapman, Chris Gunter and Trevor Phister and Ms. Diane Ducharme of North Carolina State University developed a one-page description of a research proposal designed to achieve these objectives.

Health, Wellness, Hunger and Food Access Subcommittee

The initial meeting provided opportunity for the members to hear presentations from the Farm-To-School Program (F-to-S) with Gary Gay, Director, NCDA&CS Food Distribution Division, and Tommy Fleetwood of the Marketing Division. Discussion was held on (1) How can we expand to pre-schools and universities? and, (2) How can we encourage more participation from school districts?

There was further discussion on GAP certification: the process, who sets the rules, who audits, what are barriers to F-to-S. A recommendation was made to explore fully funding NCDA&CS with additional Food Distribution staff and other identified needs to expand the Farm-To-School Program.

Three action items were agreed to be given emphasis by the Subcommittee:

1. Meet with Child Nutrition Group at conference on October 21, 2010, to highlight the F-to-S Program.

2. Survey schools on participation in the Program.
3. Look at GAP certification issues that might impede a grower's participation.

Discussion was held on the US Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-ED) funding opportunities and an action item approved: Determine what other states are doing to participate in SNAP-ED and meeting the match/documentation requirements.

There was continued discussion on Update on the Farm to Fork Public Health and Food Access Disparities Working Interest Team (CEFS Farm to Fork summit) and potential coordination of efforts with this group, review and consideration of relevant North Carolina General Assembly Obesity Task Force Recommendations.

The Subcommittee, in following meetings, approved a number of action items:

- Have someone present at the Child Nutrition Conference on October 21, 2010, to gain insight in participation barriers related to the Farm to School Program.
- Continue to explore other state examples of SNAP-ED administration.
- Conduct a working session on SNAP-ED, including a variety of stakeholders to explore how the system could be revamped to encourage participation, increase funding, and have broad state impact.
- Look to other states and offer to NCDA&CS information on what might be the role of the position dedicated to support the F-to-S Program.
- Conduct a working session surrounding use of Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards at farmer's markets, including future use with WIC benefits. Discuss options to support these programs and potential funding for current gaps in the 21st Century Farmer's market program.

Land, People and Natural Resources Subcommittee:

At its initial meeting, the Subcommittee agreed that in accordance with the General Assembly's charge for the Council, this particular subcommittee would focus on as its top priority all the many issues surrounding preservation of farmlands and water resources.

In addition to this issue, members indicated an interest in the following issue items for further study in the Subcommittee:

- VAD ordinances and inconsistencies county-to-county
- Present use value issues for smaller operations
- Profitability is bottom line ... how is this impacted by GAP certification, land preservation, VAD policies, etc.?
- Value-added, commercial grade kitchens
- One-size fits all regulations
- Information technology and transfer

- Tracking of policies and regulations – environmental, land, etc. – in lay language for general dispersal
- How do farmers get access to land?
- Farming issues often based on scale, can we define the levels?
- Costs of goods, fertilizers, labor (and access to labor), paperwork, staff to manage ever-increasing regulation
- Eminent domain
- Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJs) – municipalities that impede or prohibit agricultural practices
- Getting all agencies on same page ... adhering to the General Assembly's goals on sustainable local food economy
- Is there a means to determine intervention points in government programs and activities at which point the Council might bring notice to the General Assembly?
- Farm Transition ... “Always have one foot in each generation which creates difficulty in farm transitioning programs ... how do we bridge the gap?”
- Land ... access, costs, government intervention, utilities, regulations, water availability
- Air quality issues around local/regional processing

Subsequent discussions by the Subcommittee were on how to better utilize the efforts of the members to bring greater focus to the highest items of priority on the initial list.

SUPPORT ACTIVITIES AND VOLUNTEER SERVICES

The NCSLFAC did not receive an appropriation and must rely on financial support and in-kind contributions from outside entities. In 2010 those were:

NC Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services

The Council was designated to be housed in the NCDA&CS and the Department was obligated to provide meeting space, per diem for members, and staff resources for the Council. Commissioner Steve Troxler assigned Joy Hicks, Policy Development Analyst as the lead staff person to the Council. Additional departmental specialists were also assigned to work with the Subcommittees and work groups (*See Attachment D*). The Department also established a dedicated web page for the Council (<http://www.ncagr.gov/localfood>) and an email listserv to serve as a conduit for Council members to share information. The NCDA&CS, when not provided an appropriation to defray the operational costs of the Council, sought and secured a grant from the Golden Leaf Foundation for \$100,000 to provide additional staff support and operating expenses for the Council.

The Golden Leaf Foundation, as part of its continued support of its Local Foods Initiative, awarded the \$100,000 grant over two years to the Department to “support the operations of the NC Sustainable Local Foods Advisory Council.” The Foundation grant was provided to support the Department’s efforts in staffing through contractual services, marketing and promotions, website development and logistical expenses.

Volunteer Support

A number of other agencies and organizations have come forward to also provide support for the Council. Major contributors are as follows:

- Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project: Working with WNC Communities and NCDA&CS staff, organized a local food reception for the Council at the September 9th meeting. Additionally organized Asheville-region farm tours for the members.
- NC Farm Bureau Federation: Hosted lunch for the Council at the JC Raulston Arboretum on July 22, catered by Q Shack, Owner Tom Meyer, who works with local producers of meats and vegetables; provided meeting space for a number of subcommittee and working group meetings and conference calling services so subcommittee members could call into meetings.
- NC State University: Provided meeting rooms for a Council meeting and several subcommittee meetings; provided support for developing a GAP research proposal and speakers at Council meetings.
- WNC Communities: Linda Lamp, Executive Director, organized a reception showcasing Western North Carolina products at the September 9th Council meeting in Fletcher. (Please see Attachment X for a complete listing of contributors to the reception)

COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS

On September 9, 2010, the three Subcommittees presented and received Council approval on the following recommendations:

The NCSLFAC recommends that the General Assembly establish the following items through legislation:

- **Modify municipal annexation:** Require that no municipality may annex farm or forest land nor may any municipality regulate farming and forestry activities in their extra territorial jurisdiction if the land is within a voluntary agricultural district, enhanced voluntary agricultural district or is subject to a conservation easement designated to maintain property as “working lands”.
- **Fund ADFP for Military Support:** Provides additional financial match for the ADFP Trust Fund above the FY 10 funding level to work with military bases, training zones and other areas to protect the military presence in North Carolina and to protect the local food production on farmland in these designated areas.
- **NC Farm Transition Network Support:** The NCDA&CS and NCCES re-establish the NCFTN in partnership and:
 - A new position be provided to NCDA&CS to manage farmland transition activities within the ADFP Trust Fund; and
 - A new position be provided to NCCES to manage educational and land-link activities; and,
 - Adequate funding for the 2 position & program activities
- **Permanent Council Staff and Operating Budget:** To fully leverage the expertise and resources of the Council, Subcommittees and Working Groups, the Council recommends that a full-time organizational manager be based within the NCDA&CS to coordinate the work of the Council, follow up with members on commitments and represent the Council to various other organizations. The Council recommends and requests that staff would serve at the pleasure of the Council. Further, the Council recommends that input and direction from Council members should be core to the hiring process. In addition to a staff person, the Council recommends recurring monies for on-going Council operating expenses.
- **Reporting Date Modification:** The Council recommends that the reporting date mandated in G.S. 106-833 for the Council’s annual report be modified from October 1 to December 1.
- **Agricultural Task Force Liaison**
Name a member of the North Carolina Local Sustainable Foods Advisory Council as liaison to the North Carolina Agricultural Task Force (ATF) that is headquartered within the NCDENR Division of Soil & Water Conservation. The Council liaison would serve as a communications link to share water

quality regulatory concerns with the ATF, to raise awareness of the Council and to bring information and perspective from the ATF back to the Council.

The ATF was established to provide input into agricultural nonpoint source pollution control under the federally funded 208 Program for controlling nonpoint source pollution. Today the ATF is a voluntary working group that advises and makes recommendations to the Soil & Water Conservation Commission. (<http://portal.ncdenr.org/web/swc/agtaskforce>) As more farmers and outside entrepreneurs start up new local foods businesses or on-farm value added operations, they find themselves in a complex regulatory framework of local, county, state and federal regulation. The Ag Task Force liaison would help to create a higher level of awareness of the needs of local foods farmers and businesses among a broad swath of the state's water regulatory framework.

➤ **Develop an All-Farm GAPs Pilot Program for Small Farmers**

Support the state's small and diversified fruit and vegetable farmers by working with the North Carolina Fresh Produce Safety Task Force and its partners to develop an All-Farm GAPs (Good Agricultural Practices) pilot program. Many institutional and retail buyers require third party GAPs audits of their fruit and vegetable suppliers. In addition, in order to sell to schools through the farm to school program, farmers must be GAP certified through a third party audit. Many of North Carolina's small and diversified local foods suppliers seek to access these markets in-state. However, common thinking among small fruit/vegetable farmers is that in many instances implementing GAPs is expensive. Many larger fruit/vegetable farms implement GAPs that are commodity specific. Each different commodity thus requires a separate third party audit, which can become expensive. This approach is not feasible for many fruit/vegetable farmers because one small, highly diversified fruit and vegetable farmer may cultivate 30 different crops. Also, there is concern among small and diversified farms that GAPs practices may be unattainable and documentation requirements unrealistic. Additionally, there is concern among certified organic producers that GAPs' record-keeping requirements could duplicate records they already keep. A few organic producers who have worked with GAPs note that there can also be conflict between organic practices and GAPs. All small, diversified fruit and vegetable farmers have concerns regarding on-farm costs for changes in production, equipment purchases and labor changes that might have to be made to attain the certification.

While there is a GAP Farm Audit, most farmers currently do not choose to use this certification program. Instead, they chose commodity-specific GAP audits to meet buyer requirements. However, the GAP Farm Audit may be able to form the basis for an All-Farms GAP program for small and diversified fruit and vegetable farms. By working with farms in North Carolina to determine what practices are already being employed that work for GAPs and to learn which practices may be unrealistic, the resulting All-Farm GAPs pilot program would focus on food safety on the farm holistically. Such a GAPs program would in essence be an expansion of the existing GAP Farm Audit

and result in a continual focus on food safety by the farmer. By helping to develop such a program and working with institutional buyers to obtain recognition for the program, the Council can empower smaller, diversified local market fruit and vegetable farmers to approach wholesale markets that are currently out of their reach as a result of the cumbersome and excessively costly third-party audit requirements. The data and insights gained by the Pilot will help to shape an All-Farm GAP program through NCDA&CS and USDA.

- **Continue Support of Farm To School:** Support the Farm to School Program that connects schools (K-12) and local farms and promote the objectives of serving healthy meals in school cafeterias, improving student nutrition, providing agriculture, health and nutrition education opportunities, and supporting local and regional farmers.
- **Continue to grow the USDA Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education (SNAP-ED)** This would include expanding the social marketing, removing barriers to participation, nutritional education and inclusion of a local food component of the SNAP-ED program.
- **Plan for the Future of Electronics Benefit Transfer (EBT) and Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Programs:** Encourage efforts to reach more people with healthy food access and increasing revenue for more farmers. Provide support for farmers markets to purchase wireless electronic benefit transfer (EBT) devices and promote efforts for outreach and education programs that encourage residents of lower-income neighborhoods and SNAP-ED and WIC recipients to use farmers markets and farm stands.

The Council also adopted a resolution on April 22, 2010 supporting funding for the North Carolina Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund and transmitted the resolution to the President Pro Tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives:

Now Therefore Be It Resolved that the North Carolina Sustainable Local Food Advisory Council urges the General Assembly of North Carolina to appropriate five million dollars to the North Carolina Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund for the 2010-2011 fiscal year.

Appendix A: Authorizing Legislation

The North Carolina Sustainable Local Food Advisory Council was established in August 2009 upon the ratification of Senate Bill 1067. The purpose and responsibilities of the Council can be found in Session Law 2009-530, Chapter 106-830 through 833 of the General Statutes:

<http://www.ncga.state.nc.us/EnactedLegislation/SessionLaws/HTML/2009-2010/SL2009-530.html>

Appendix B: NCSLFAC Membership

Name	Position	Appointed By	Term	Pos. No.
Commissioner Steve Troxler	Commissioner of Agriculture or the Commissioner's designee	Ex officio		1
Jeffrey P. Engel, M.D.	State Health Director or the Director's designee	Ex officio		2
Secretary J. Keith Crisco	Secretary of Commerce or the Secretary's designee	Ex officio		3
Linda Harris	Local organic food producers, organic animal producer	Hackney	7/1/2012	4
Ted Burch	Local organic food producer, organic crop producer	Hackney	7/1/2012	5
Tommy Porter, Jr.	Conventional food producer, animal producer	Commissioner	7/1/2012	6
Randall Patterson	Conventional food producer, crop producer	Commissioner	7/1/2012	7
Jamie Ager	Sustainable animal producer	Commissioner	7/1/2012	8
Mary James	Sustainable crop producer	Commissioner	7/1/2013	9
Willy Phillips	Representative of commercial fishing industry	Basnight	7/1/2013	10
Phil Hudson	Representative of the NC State Grange	Hackney	7/1/2013	11
Debbie Hamrick	Representative from the NC Farm Bureau Federation, Inc	Hackney	7/1/2013	12
Barry Nash	Representative of the Sea Grant College program	Basnight	7/1/2013	13
Roland McReynolds	Representative of the Carolina Farm Stewardship Association	Governor	7/1/2013	14
Dr. Nancy Creamer	Representative of the Center for Environmental Farming Systems	Governor	7/1/2013	15
Dania Davy	Representative of the NC Association of Black Lawyers' Land Loss Prevention Project	Commissioner	7/1/2013	16
Charlie Jackson	Representative of the Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project	Basnight	7/1/2014	17
Mac Legerton	Representative of the Center of Community Action, Inc.	Commissioner	7/1/2014	18
John Day	Representative of the NC Association of County Commissioners	Basnight	7/1/2014	19
Dr. Lynn Harvey	Representative of the Department of Public Instruction, Child Nutrition Services Section	Basnight	7/1/2014	20
Dr. Ed Jones	Representative of the NC Cooperative Extension Service, jointly administered by NCSU and NC A&T	Governor	7/1/2014	21

Dr. Alice Ammerman	Representative of the Center for Health Promotion and Disease prevention at the UNC-Chapel Hill	Basnight	7/1/2014	22
Earline Middleton	Representative of a food bank located in NC	Governor	7/1/2014	23
LaTisha Watford	Representative of the food retail or food service industry	Governor	7/1/2014	24
Andrew Branan	Representative of the NC Farm Transition Network, Inc.	Hackney	7/1/2014	25
Billy Ray Hall	Representative of the NC Rural Economic Development Center, Inc.	Hackney	7/1/2014	26
Uli Bennewitz	Representative of a business engaged in the processing, packing, or distribution of food	Hackney	7/1/2014	27

Appendix C: Subcommittee Guidelines

NORTH CAROLINA SUSTAINABLE LOCAL FOOD ADVISORY COUNCIL SUBCOMMITTEE GUIDELINES ESTABLISHED APRIL 22, 2010

1. The Council shall establish Subcommittees with responsibility to make recommendations to the full Council regarding the issues assigned to each.
2. Council members will be assigned to serve on one Subcommittee if they desire. Council members' assignment preference will try to be accommodated. Council members can serve on more than one Subcommittee.
3. Members of each Subcommittee shall elect a Council member from among the Subcommittee membership to serve as Chair. Council members can only serve as Chair on one Subcommittee.
4. The Chair of each Subcommittee will serve on the Executive Committee of the Council and shall be liaison between the Subcommittee and Council Staff.
5. The Executive Committee will be composed of the Chairs of each Subcommittee, and the Council Chair and Vice Chair.
6. Any Subcommittee may invite members of the public to present information to the Subcommittee. Requests for presentations to the full Council must be recommended through the relevant Subcommittee.
7. The Council may alter, adjust, add, or otherwise change the number, responsibilities or other aspect of Subcommittee structures in any duly authorized meeting of the full Council.
8. A quorum of Subcommittee members must be present to take formal action. Only appointed members of the Council may vote on Subcommittee items. A quorum is constituted by a simple majority.
9. The Chair and Vice Chair of the Council shall be Ex officio members of all Subcommittees.
10. Subcommittees will keep official minutes of meetings and at the first meeting shall determine how they will conduct business, whether it will be by general consensus or Robert's Rules of Order.
11. Ad hoc committees may be appointed by the Chair and Vice Chair to work on issues as needed.
12. The Executive Committee shall report Subcommittee activities to the Council; will set Council meeting agendas; and will ensure the Council carries out the legislative mandates of its enabling legislation.

Appendix D: Subcommittee Membership

Updated August 30, 2010

Economic Development	Health, Wellness, Hunger and Food Access	Land, People and Natural Resources
Debbie Hamrick*	Alice Ammerman*	Ed Jones*
Jamie Ager	Ted Burch	Andrew Branan
Uli Bennewitz	Jeffrey Engel	Ted Burch
Keith Crisco	Lynn Harvey	Dania Davy
Billy Ray Hall	Mary James	John Day
Charlie Jackson	Earline Middleton	Linda Harris
Mac Legerton	LaTisha Watford	Phil Hudson
Roland McReynolds		Randall Patterson
Willy Phillips		Tommy Porter
9	7	9

Notes:

- Subcommittee Chairs are listed first and in bold font
- Commissioner Steve Troxler and Dr. Nancy Creamer serve as ex-officio members of each of the subcommittees by virtue of their Council leadership positions.
- NCDA&CS subcommittee staff are as follows:
 - Economic Development – Ron Fish, Assistant Director, Marketing Division
 - Health, Wellness, Hunger and Food Access – Jim Melvin, Assistant Director of Regulatory Program, Food and Drug Inspection Division
 - Land, People, and Natural Resources – Dewitt Hardee, Program Director of the ADFP Trust Fund

Appendix E: Farmland Preservation Resolution

NORTH CAROLINA SUSTAINABLE LOCAL FOOD ADVISORY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION

SUPPORTING FIVE MILLION DOLLARS BE DEDICATED TO THE NORTH CAROLINA AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AND FARMLAND PRESERVATION TRUST FUND

Whereas, the General Assembly established in 2009 the North Carolina Sustainable Local Food Advisory Council to address program and policy considerations regarding the development of a sustainable local food economy in North Carolina; **and**

Whereas, the General Assembly established in 2005 the North Carolina Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund to encourage the preservation of agricultural, horticultural and forest lands to foster the growth, development and sustainability of family farms; **and**

Whereas, North Carolina has lost more than 600,000 acres of farmland since 2002; **and**

Whereas, the Council finds that it is critical to integrate farmland preservation into the development of a sustainable local food economy; **and**

Whereas, protecting and preserving farmland is an important part of the Council's effort to rebuild our local food infrastructure and our local food economy that will benefit North Carolina by creating jobs, stimulating statewide economic development, preserve open space, decrease the use of fossil fuel, preserve and protect the natural environment, increase consumer access to fresh and nutritious foods, and provide greater security for all North Carolinians;

Now Therefore Be It Resolved that the North Carolina Sustainable Local Food Advisory Council urges the General Assembly of North Carolina to appropriate Five Million Dollars to the North Carolina Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund for the 2011 fiscal year.

Further Be It Resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to the members of the North Carolina General Assembly.

Adopted April 22, 2010



Commissioner Steve Troxler
Chair

Jamie Ager
Alice Ammerman
Uli Bennewitz
Andrew Branan
Ted Burch
Keith Crisco
Dania Davy
John Day

Jeffrey Engel
Billy Ray Hall
Debbie Hamrick
Linda Harris
Lynn Harvey
Phil Hudson
Charlie Jackson
Mary James



Dr. Nancy Creamer
Vice Chair

Mac Legerton
Roland McReynolds
Earline E. Middleton
Barry Nash
Jon Ort
Randall Patterson
Willy Phillips
Tommy Porter, Jr.

Appendix F: Council Meeting Agendas and Minutes

The Agendas and Minutes of the Council are available on:

<http://www.ncagr.gov/localfood/>

Appendix G: Subcommittee Meeting Agendas and Minutes

The Agendas and Minutes of the Subcommittees are available on:

<http://www.ncagr.gov/localfood/>

Appendix H: In-kind Contributors

- Donations and assistance at the reception included:
 - Doug Sutton, Market Manager, WNC FARMER'S MARKET
 - PEREZ FARMS at WNC Farmer's Market
 - ASHE COUNTY CHEESE at WNC Farmer's Market
 - SWEETHINGS BAKERY at WNC Farmer's Market
 - COATES PRODUCE at WNC Farmer's Market
 - SMOKY MOUNTAIN PICKLING COMPANY at WNC Farmer's Market
 - WOODY FARMS at WNC Farmer's Market
 - APPLE WEDGE at WNC Farmer's Market
 - George Ivey & Anne Lancaster, BUY HAYWOOD
 - SUNBURST TROUT COMPANY, Canton, NC
 - LINGERING THYMES FARM Waynesville, NC
 - Laurey's Catering
 - J.W. Johnson Tomato Company, Canton, NC
 - The Wholesome Agrarian, Waynesville, NC
 - Leatherwood & Sons Farm, Cruso, NC
 - The Ten Acre Garden, Bethel, NC
 - Balsam Gardens, Sylva, NC
 - Mary Lou Sturgi, Executive Director, Jill Frazer, Product Development, BLUE RIDGE FOOD VENTURES
 - WINTER SUN FARMS at Blue Ridge Food Ventures
 - THE MOUNTAIN BBQ SAUCE at Blue Ridge Food Ventures
 - SPICY MUSTARD SAUCE at Blue Ridge Food Ventures
 - George Lenze, EVERETT FARMS
 - Jamie Ager, HICKORY NUT GAP FARMS
 - Ross Young, MADISON FARMS
 - MCCONNELL FARMS, Hendersonville, NC
 - HOUSER FARMS, Vale, NC
 - Megan Ray, Program Coordinator, APPALACHIAN SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE PROJECT
 - L. T. Ward, Vice President, Linda Lamp, Executive Director, WNC COMMUNITIES

- Farm tours were provided by the following farms:
 - **Gladheart Farm**
 - Hickory Nut Gap Farm