
Governor's Council on Climate Change (GC3)

AG/Soils Working Group

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date: April 30, 2020

Meeting Time: 2 PM

Meeting Location: Remote

Meeting via Zoom

ATTENDENCE

	Title	Organization	Present
Bryan Hurlburt	Commissioner	CT DOAG	
Kayleigh Royston		CT DOAG	
Kip Kolensinkas			
Kimberly Stoner		CAES	
Lilian Ruiz			
Chelsea Gazillo		Working Lands Alliance	
Indrajeet Chaubey		UCONN	
Amanda Fargo-Johnson		CT RC&D	
Joanna Wozniak-Brown			
Meg Hourigan			
Cynthia Rabinowitz			
Dina Brewster		CT Nofa	
Amanda Freund			
Cheryl Cappiali		UCONN Extension	

AGENDA & NOTES

Zoom link for meeting:

Welcome and Announcements

Commissioner Bryan Hurlburt welcomed the group and thanked them for their continued work during Covid-19. He noted that today's topic of market opportunities was especially important given the need to build a stronger food and agricultural system moving forward.

Commissioner Hurlburt emphasized that through the Covid 19 pandemic, consumers are more heavily relying on farmers markets and farm stands as an alternative to conventional grocery stores. The agency has created an interactive farm map with CT Nofa to display open nearby farmers markets and farm stands for consumers.

He thanked John Ramsey from the Center for an Agricultural Economy for joining this meeting to discuss what his organization is currently doing in Vermont to enhance the food economy.

Agenda Item(s)

Facilitated by Jon Ramsey, Center for an Agricultural Economy

- Presentation by Jon Ramsey: The Center for an Agricultural Economy promotes local food systems in the Hardwick, Vermont area. This organization runs a number of programs which support the local food economy. These programs include: farm and food business advising, shared-use commercial kitchens, farm to institute supply chain efforts, farm product delivery services, Vermont farm fund, and Vermont equipment access programs. Through federal funding and private foundation funds, they have been able to develop and build a comprehensive share-use commercial kitchen and food hub. They have been able to create a farm to institute pipeline which allows for large food service contracts. Jon emphasized the connection between the producer and the consumer and giving them the opportunity to understand the needs of one another has been key to their success.
- Group Discussion: Funding sources for Jon's project, which consisted primarily of federal grants and some private fundraising. Lillian Ruiz asked about the possibility to replicate the model used in Vermont here in Connecticut and which features of the structure would be best suited here in Connecticut. Chelsea Gazillo asked what type of support the state of Vermont provides for the organization and Jon Ramsey answered that a state grant largely covers their annual operating costs of around \$160,000 but that USDA grants cover additional costs, as well as private fundraising. Joanna Wozniak-Brown asked what type of information or support our members of the ag community have been asking for in relation to climate change- Jon stated that dairy farmers specifically are struggling to mitigate their needs in relation to climate change. As this group is tasked with proposing policies and ideas to mitigate climate change and increase adaptation for our agriculture and soils, the aspects of this model which we may be able to replicate, according to Jon Ramsey, include their farm to institution program. The group discussed projects in Connecticut which are operating similarly. Kimberly Stoner from the CT Ag Experiment Station let us know that there are some efforts relating to incubator farms which could be used as a vehicle. The Hartford Regional Market was originally intended to house some of these core components but is no longer operated under the CT Department of Agriculture.

Next steps:

- Next meeting of this subgroup will focus on Farming and Land Use Practices.

**NOTE: Identify if slides or presentations are available on GC3 web page: www.ct.gov/deep/gc3
(Zoom link is posted at the beginning of these minutes)**