

CT Food Policy Council
Minutes
February 11, 2009 -- 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.
Department of Agriculture Conference Room
165 Capitol Avenue, Hartford CT

Present:

<u>Council Members</u>	<u>Representatives</u>	<u>Guests</u>
Linda Drake	Ellen Sloan	Bill Duesing- CTNOFA
Michael Keilty	Jiff Martin	Wayne Kasacek- DOAG
Teri Dandeneau	Jana Engle	Heather Thibeault
Mary Parizo	Stan Sorkin	Annemarie Prauss- Meadowstone Farm
David Yandow		Chris Hopkins –Stone Wall Dairy
Rick Macsuga		Chris Newton –Baldwin Brook Farm
		Bruce Sherman –DOAG
		Jean King

The meeting was called to order by Linda Drake at 1:10 p.m

The minutes of the January, 2009 were amended to reflect that Michael Keilty was part of the meeting with NOFA and the Farm Bureau about taking on the issues of meat and poultry producers. The minutes were approved.

Old Business:

A copy of the letter sent to Governor Rell from the Council regarding SNAP was distributed. Mary Parizo noted that there would potentially be 17,000 new SNAP cases when expanded categorical eligibility is implemented and that could strain staffing although not all cases would come at once. She also noted that the stimulus bill funding for staffing for SNAP requires not to reduce their 2008 level of staffing. The Council discussed the fact that these are things the Governor could implement now without waiting for the new state budget.

Other Business:

1. Discussion of proposed changes in regulations for raw milk. Dr. Sherman presented the Dept. of Agriculture's position on proposed new regulations for sale of raw milk in CT. He emphasized the Department's concern for food safety and public health. The Department has changed some of its proposal since the bill was presented to the legislative committee. There was considerable discussion about the proposal with representatives of producers who were present and members of the Council.
2. CT Food Policy Council existence. The Governor has proposed eliminating the Food Policy Council entirely, not just de-funding it. The Council discussed the need to testify before the Appropriations Committee on the issue, emphasizing that the Council should continue to exist even if it is not funded in the current budget process. The hearing is February 17. Jean and Linda will prepare testimony.

Agency program sharing:

Paige Abrams has resigned as a member of the Council.

Teri Dandeneau (Dept. of Education) reported that a proposed bill reduces the funding from 10 cents to 5 cents for schools participating in the Healthy Foods program.

Jean King presented new data from the USDA 2007 Census of Agriculture. It reports an increase in the number of farms in Connecticut back up to the level of 1997. We need to look at data further to understand what this means.

The meeting adjourned at 3.

Next meeting, March 12, 2009, Department of Agriculture