



**STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Bureau of Ag Development & Resource Conservation**



Bryan P. Hurlburt  
Commissioner

860-713-2501  
CTGrown.gov

## Connecticut Food Policy Council

### MEETING AGENDA

July 14, 2022

1:00 PM- 3:00 PM

**Via WebEx**

Join from the meeting link:

<https://ctdoag.webex.com/ctdoag/j.php?MTID=m7a1014d061426402921dee77a7ff748a>

**Join by meeting number**

Meeting number (access code): 132 460 3963

Meeting password: euNtH3A3Nf7

Members Present: Martha Page, Kim Boulette, Lynn Peccerillo-Hills, Susan Pronovost, Jiff Martin, Monica Pacheco, Priscilla Cotto, Patrick Doyle, Molly Devanney, Bryan Hurlburt

Members Absent: Daniel Giacomi

Public: Gary Wallace, Meg Hourigan, Peggy Zamore, Marilyn Lonczak, Billie Scruse, Alison Ghiorse

DoAg Staff: Erin Windham, Cyrena Thibodeau and Kayleigh Royston, Jaime Smith

1. Call to Order: Commissioner Hurlburt called the meeting to order at 1:06PM.
2. Review and approval of meeting minutes from May 12, 2022: Sue made motion to approve, Monica seconded. No comments or revisions. Commission abstains, motion passed.
3. Public Comment: No public comments.
4. Old Business
  - a. CT Food System Alliance/Hartford Food System-Update, *Meg Hourigan*
    - Been working this year with a number of funders through the CT community foundations who are interested in a statewide food plan. Recently had a presentation with a number of the community foundations to introduce the project, answer questions, and tap into their grantees.
    - Youth and older adult food conversations upcoming later this summer, will provide input for the plan as well as general stories.
    - Martha there was a recent conversation with New England state ag departments and the NE Feeding NE Research team. Would like to talk to this food policy council about creating a food count and how that would connect into regional work.
  - b. Food System Capacity Building Grant
    - Erin we incorporated comments from last meeting and guidance has been approved internally. Requested any final comments from committee.
    - Sue commented that there should be clarification around the “Business in good standing” and how that relates to corner stores and other grocers.
    - Jiff commented on clarification needed under the category for farmers markets and thoughts that several of the examples listed weren’t relevant to markets. What about including incentive programs in this? Purpose needs to be updated to reflect more than just BIPOC farmers.
    - Jaime commented that incentive programs are difficult because it is not a sustainable venture and would require continued funding to keep it running.

-Jiff is this an opportunity to pilot state incentives or doing cost sharing for farmers for equipment for accepting EBT?

-Commissioner thinks that there should be a mention of EndHunger CT SNAP matching that is being funded by DoAg. Acknowledge that if markets want to do incentives, here is the best way to do it. Include SNAP processing infrastructure but acknowledge that viability could be a way to do this on a larger scale.

Jiff also thought that CTG4CTK grant should be acknowledged for producers to get small infrastructure to work with schools.

## 5. New Business

### a. Policy Process and Recommendations, *Kayleigh Royston, PhD, Legislative Liaison, CT Department of Agriculture*

-Internal policy process and timeline moving forward. Oct 1 when legislative proposals are due. Currently reviewing proposals that didn't pass, other sister agency and other state proposals that should be considered.

-If boards and councils have recommendations for the agency to consider in its package, those conversations should be happening now.

-Jiff proposed for the council and agency to discuss and consider- requesting permanent funding for the CTG4CTK grant program at a minimum of \$250,000 and ideally \$500,000 annually. Second would be to establish a state funded SNAP matching program replicating the MA Healthy Incentive Program as it is a widely successful program, even if it was just to start a pilot or focus on a specific group.

Martha and Patrick expressed strong support for both of Jiff's proposals.

Monica expressed strong support for CTG4CTK grant funding.

Jiff made a motion for the council to recommend to the Department of agriculture to consider including in its legislative package a request to permanently fund the CT Grown for CT Kids Grant program at \$500,000 minimum annually. Monica seconded. Motion passed.

Jiff made a motion for the council to recommend to the Department to consider including in its legislative package a request for a minimum of \$1.5 million per fiscal year for a SNAP matching program. Commissioner requested modification that it be modeled after the MA Healthy Incentive Program. Martha seconded. Motion passed.

### b. Benefits programs for LFPA

-Cyrena requested any materials on nutrition benefits and other programs be sent to her for distribution through the program.

## 6. Next Steps

Bill will be joining us next meeting to discuss the strategic plan, it will be sent to members prior to the meeting to review.

## 7. Board Member Updates

**Jiff:** Highlights are, we've been visiting farmers and seeing what they've been doing with the small stipends we were able to award them. Ex. irrigation, row cover, small equipment. In the thick of summer meal site taste tests thanks to support from the CT department of education. Will share the analysis from this grant program.

**Martha:** Nothing more!

**Molly:** Everyone wants to talk about inflation. Industry always a challenge. Having to do last minute pricing. More people than ever using SNAP, redemptions are through the roof.

**Monica:** Keep Kids Fed Act, signed on June 25. Was last minute as on June 30 all waivers expired. Lots to come. Waivers extended to summer meals programs goes through September 30. For next school year are allowing for non-cost waivers to be expended, additional reimbursement amount. CACFP additional 10 cents per meal. Additional 30M in state funds to be able to offer free meals to allow for families and schools to have a transition time to when applications for free and reduced meals will have to be put in. Working on the local foods for schools program, working directly with schools and creating connections

between producers, particularly small and socially disadvantaged producers. Having it to look a bit like an incentive program. Will be base funded and then additional funding to go above. Farm to School formula grant- noncompetitive grant program but don't have any details.

**Patrick-** things are busy at KNOX but grass is slowing down. Recently able to purchase a 2-acre property in Hartford that currently housing a garden that has been a community garden for over 40 years. Battles Street Garden and used state bonding process to purchase. KNOX is undergoing the process of making sure that it is preserved as a community garden space in perpetuity. On one of the other sites, there is demo going on. We got the city to split the cost with us to be able to preserve public art that is on the fence at the site. Monday is out Farmers Market in Hartford.

**Sue:** Been doing a lot of field work with producers- and the big issues are water, water, water. A lot of farmers are very concerned what their wholesale dealers are telling them about pricing. Don't know if greenhouse operations are going to be able to continue as the price of diesel approaches \$8/gallon.

**Priscilla:** Nothing to share!

**Erin:** LFPA announcements coming soon. Working with EndHunger CT on SNAP doubling incentives. Marketlink is still working with direct market farms and farmers markets on getting them enrolled to accept and process s benefits. FMNP/WIC coupons have begun to go out. Farmers markets are in full swing. Senior FMNP 6 federal sites that have checks and state checks are on their way.

8. Adjournment. Sue made a motion to adjourn. Molly seconded. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 2:17 PM

Respectfully submitted by Cyrena Thibodeau, AMIR July 19, 2022