



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 Minutes

September 8, 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:** Patrick Doyle, Jiff Martin, Molly Devanney, Susan Pronovost, Commissioner Hurlburt, Lynn Peccerillo-Hills, Monica Pacheco
- Members Absent:** Marcia Pessalano (Kim present to represent DPH)
- Public:** Peggy Zamore, Chelsea Gazillo, Jenna Nicol, Kristen Conway, Sally Mancini, Shana Brierly, Meg Hourigan
- DoAg staff Present:** Cyrena Thibodeau, Erin Windham, Jaime Smith, Martine Kunzika

1. **Call to Order:** Commissioner Hurlburt called meeting to order at 1:04PM
2. **Review and approval of meeting minutes from July 14, 2022:** Sue made motion to approve, Martha seconded. No comments or revisions. Motion passed.
3. **Public Comment:** Peggy- lots of positive feedback about increase in the WIC/FMNP coupon amounts and the inclusion of eggs.
4. **Old Business**
 - a. **CT Food System Alliance/Hartford Food System-Update, Meg Hourigan**
 - Been meeting with the farmers market to determine desired outcomes about collaborating together. 1)strengthening markets (peer to peer learning for example) 2)supporting farmers (recruitment and needs) 3)supporting attendees (SNAP outreach and communication for example). In November/December there will be a training for markets to build relationships with elected officials.
 - CTFTSC steering committee to be working on a survey/interview questions about what people need to be able participate in planning.
 - Working on planning a summit to review our work, engage new people, and build new connections.

Martha: proposed for next meeting that we have a specific time set aside to really talk to the council about the urgency for the Food System Plan. Members approve adding it to the November agenda.
 - b. **Food System Capacity Building Grant**
 - Erin: incorporated all the requested changes from the council. Sue- should there be some caveat for grocery stores/bodegas that they have a requirement for the amount of CT Grown/local food they need to incorporate. Martha- should then pantries be held to this same standard? Commissioner- what about just putting in priority will be given to applicants who utilize CT Grown products? Monica agrees with Commissioner's

suggestion. Molly would also agree and said that CT FoodShare is trying to do this of sourcing as much CT products as possible and same in the grocery world.

- Erin: FPC grant and CTG4CTK will be open at the same time, does anyone see any issue with this or do we want to proceed as schedule? Council decided to proceed as it. Council approves the guidance and releasing the FPC grant next Thursday September 15.
 - Jiff: Sustainable CT, the grant tracks exactly with one of their action areas to organize around food. It would be really smart to make sure that the grant is shared really intentionally with the municipalities that are trying to get credit under this area.
- c. Strategic Plan, Bill Logue
- Bill was unable to be here today. Erin will share out the strategic plan next week and we will schedule one-on-one meetings to get council member feedback.

5. New Business

- a. Food Protection Task Force, *Jenna Nicol, CT DPH (correction she is part of department of consumer protection)*
- Has funding for food protection task force (industry stakeholders, grocery)
 - Kristen Conway- FDA funded taskforce. Have met 3 times so far, have most of members from CT. Brainstorming and networking right now and want to come up with a potential food safety plan and also a plan to respond if there is a emergency again with infant formula shortage.
 - Looking to build out the team, want to include groups such grocery stores, pantries, manufactures. Anyone who could be involved in manufacturing infant formula or distribution, please reach out.

6. Next Steps

- a. Release of the Food System Capacity Building grant on 9/15 and strategic plan to be sent out shortly and then one-on-one council member connections to happen with DoAg staff. *Martha: proposed for next meeting that we have a specific time set aside to really talk to the council about the urgency for the Food System Plan. Members approve adding it to the November agenda.*

7. Board Member Updates

Dan (DSS)- Continue to do SNAP emergency allotments, just received approval for September allotments. 820 Million additional SNAP benefits provided in last 2 years. P-EBT (SNAP benefits for students) a bit behind getting those benefits out, 3M went out at the beginning of aug. release info should be in governors press release. As of oct 1 of this year, dss will increase snap gross income limit to 200% of the federal poverty line. Broad based categorical eligibility. Will allow more families to become eligible to receive SNAP and other programs such as school meals and other benefits. In November, we are releasing on our webpage, we are adding that people will be able to see their benefit balance online instead of needing to call in. More information will be coming on this as we get closer.

Peggy- who will be getting the P-EBT?

Dan-Originally was all children throughout the state, then students learning remotely, then end of 2021 legislative session that limited schools ability to do remote learning. 1)home sick with COVID 2) immunocompromised 3)have a learning plan that said they needed to learn from home 4)classroom was shut down. This information goes directly from schools and to CSDE. Then that data is matched with those who are eligible to receive school meals, that data will get sent to DSS for processing.

Martha- CT FTSC have been deeply connected to the NE Feeding NE and there has been federal funding to support baseline research which is wrapping up. There is going to be a full report on that coming out soon and look forward to sharing that out with this group and others. Aiming to have it completed in December. Hoping that it will tell us a lot about opportunities in building a more resilient food system.

Monica (CSDE)-school is open. Though its been a bit crazy, has been good. 30M through

SMART funds to allow schools to transition back to “normal” of submitting applications for free or reduced priced meals. Funds are meant to bridge the gap, allow schools to do communication to families and help them through the application process. Funds will not likely cover the full year. Does not apply to CEP districts, those continue to receive all funding. A whole new platform need to be established for redemption for this and hopefully everything is in place. Seeing a lot of supply chain issues, relying on distributors and USDA foods, encouraging them to try to connect to local options for sourcing. Working on CTG4CTK week planning and some initial information has gone out. supporting the 3 C’s and offering activities. October is national farm to school month. **Patrick (KNOX)**- tings are going well, busy managing the season. Reminder, we do have out market every Monday 11-1 on laurel street. In the midst of staff transition, urban farming manager has left and are looking to hire a new individual with farming experience and experience working with BIPOC farmers.

Sue -thanks god is rained a bit.

Jiff- because CTG4CTK week is coming up oct 3-7, there’s a lot of work going on in the tray office updating materials. If have any of you have kids in a district or know an educator, please let them know that CTG4CTK week is coming up and all the materials and resources that are available. Solid ground farmer training- wrapping up summer training (urban farming training) and looking to winter trainings and brainstorming what topics we want. Grown Connected- been tabling at a bunch of events and building visibility for that marketing campaign.

Lynn-our state agencies that have procurement services are facing a lot of supply chain shortages.

Molly-struggling with supply, have a lot of CT Grown produce available now, labor storage issues. Working on wine in grocery stores. CT Foodshare has a strategic plan that is soon to be released. Maybe it would be of interest to the council to have Jason come and present to the council. Seeing lots of price changes coming through, a lot of customers have been asking about thanksgiving turkeys. There will be plenty but size will be an issue.

Priscilla- no updates

Kim (on behalf of DPH)-have been seeing a growth in our program from referrals from DSS. Glad that families are getting the services that they need.

Commissioner Hurlburt- CTG4CTK week and grant, this week is Farm to Chef week and had a kickoff at GVI this past weekend, USDA announced a new application for regional food business centers- for local groups to apply to become one. VT food system is organizing an emergency food system summit. Legislature created a food is medicine working group, first meeting was last week. An opportunity for people to participate, chaired by Rep. Jaime Foster. Announced our local food purchase program and all contracts are executed, and projects are started. We didn’t have enough federal money, so we took some money from the farm viability program to ensure geographic coverage.

Jaime- updated to CT Grown campaign on both the website and our blog, encouraging visiting farmers markets and using benefits, using CT Grown in school lunches.

8. Adjournment

Martha made a motion to adjourn. Sue seconded. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned 2:04 PM

Respectfully submitted by Cyrena Thibodeau, AMIR September 9, 2022

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