



Urban Ag Work Group Meeting Notes

Fairfax Food Council

November 18, 2024

10:00 – 11:00 am

Introductions:

Attendees individually introduced themselves and their urban agriculture backgrounds and interests.

Live Healthy Fairfax Awards Announcement

Susan Sanow, Partnership for a Healthier Fairfax

The Partnership for a Healthier Fairfax is seeking nominations for its 2025 Live Healthy Fairfax Award. This award recognizes individuals, businesses, government, and organizations – both public and private – that have demonstrated exemplary supportive leadership and action to improve the health and well-being of individuals, families, and populations in the Fairfax community. The three areas of focus are:

- Behavioral Health
- Healthy Eating
- Healthy Environment and Active Living

Use this link to learn more and make a nomination by December 16:

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/livehealthy/live-healthy-fairfax-awards>

Tips for Maximizing Food Usage

UAWG Co-Chairs

As a follow-up to October's food waste diversion discussion, the work group discussed some tips to maximize food usage.

- Plan meals in advance so you only buy what you plan to use.
- Quiche and frittata are great meal options to use extra veggies and herbs
- Freeze dry herbs and produce to preserve nutrients and save space
- Keep produce longer by freezing or dehydrating it.
- Dehydrate excess tomatoes from your garden and make a powder. Then use powder to thicken soup

- Remember that if you dehydrate raw foods, the bacteria will still be present when you rehydrate it, so make sure to cook items thoroughly.
- It's soup season, so freeze celery ends, carrot ends, bones, and citrus peels to use later in homemade stock/broth.
- During this holiday season, instead of throwing away the smaller pieces of turkey, use them to make a pot pie.
- During this holiday season, instead of throwing away poultry carcasses, use them to make homemade stock.
- Use citrus peels even in vinegar cleaning products

In addition to offering tips, the group shared a few resources:

- [FoodKeeper App | FoodSafety.gov](#)
 - Will help you maximize the freshness and quality of items. By doing so you will be able to keep items fresh longer than if they were not stored properly.
- [Food Facts - How to Cut Food Waste and Maintain Food Safety \(fda.gov\)](#)
 - How to Cut Food Waste and Maintain Food Safety
- [7 Ways to Use Your Ingredients - Capital Area Food Bank](#)
- [Produce Guides - Capital Area Food Bank](#)
 - Provides storage advice, recommended uses, nutrition facts, pairing suggestions, etc.
- [Roasted Tomato Soup Recipe | Gimme Some Oven](#)

Member Updates

- **Andrew** is growing hard-neck garlic this season since winter weather is too harsh for banana and pepper plants.
- **Cassandra** suggested that people plant cover cropping this time of year.
- **Karen** shared that school gardens are currently focused on growing cool-weather crops and cover crops.
- **Tony** shared that constant watering of turnips, arugula, kale, and lettuce helps to offset drought this time of year.
- **Willie** shared an update that the Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District was awarded a grant to help them develop an urban agriculture roadmap to improve food production and access within the county.
- **Juan Pablo** shared that he recently bought a small tree branch shredder for \$95 (normally \$150) on Facebook Marketplace. He says it is great for making mulch from corn stalks and other big garden debris. Plus, excess mulch can make a great addition to the compost pile.

There will be no December meeting.

Next Urban Ag Work Group Meeting: January 27, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.