



Policy Task Force Meeting Notes

Fairfax Food Council

April 16, 2024

Policies vs. Programs

Kerri LaCharite

Last month's group discussions were focused more on programs than policies. Therefore, Kerri discussed the differences between policies and programs. Here are some examples.

Policy	VS	Programming
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jefferson County Food Policy Council (CO)<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Worked with the City of Golden to pass an ordinance requiring farmers markets to accept SNAP• Dane County Food Council (WI)<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Local Food Purchase Policy explores options for purchasing and serving locally produced foods in the county's jails, juvenile detention center and senior centers		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Allen County Food Policy Council (OH)<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Started a Green Prescription Program pilot in partnership with a local hospital and food bank.• Connecticut Food Policy Council<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improved School Lunch and Breakfast programs and changed bid procedures to increase opportunities for local food wholesalers

Note that the difference between a program and a policy has nothing to do with impact. It is about how it is instituted. If it is instituted by writing it into legislation, it is policy. If it is instituted within an organization, it is likely a program.

Zoning ordinances and school board policies may fall into both categories. Ultimately, policies are harder to repeal than programs.

This topic opened a robust group discussion, which prompted work group members to share alternative ways to think about policies vs. programs. Here are a couple of suggestions:

- Think of policy as an intent and programs as an action.

- Sometimes, policies can be more action-oriented, but other times, they are guides for requirements to be met or for programs to be created.
- So, policies can be action-oriented, but policies don't exactly go out into the community like programs do.
- Think of the different levels of Policy. Think about county ordinances, state zoning, and federal legislation.

Keep in mind that this group will not be writing policies. Instead, it will be writing recommendations. In the past, the Food Council provided input and raised awareness but did not necessarily write the policy.

Setting a Food Policy Agenda: 3 Potential Policies

Kerri LaCharite

Many programmatic suggestions were made last month, so to try to address the themes and purposes of the programs with relevant policies, the following policy ideas were proposed.

Setting Food Policy Agenda

Food Production

- Urban commercial agriculture zoning

Access

- County Funding for Vouchers for Veggies or SNAP Healthy Incentives

Or

- Zoning to limit the density of food stores with limited healthy offerings (Dollar Stores)

Procurement

- Barriers to Mobile Markets
 - Permitting
 - Zoning
 - Inspection
 - Regulation

Or

- A local government purchasing preference of local food when available

Breakout Groups: Compare Last Month's Program Ideas to the 3 Policies Presented

Group Activity

The three breakout groups briefly discussed the proposed policies and other ways to turn their programmatic suggestions into policy suggestions.

Access	
Policy Ideas/Notes	Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing incentives to markets that open or offer fresh produce in underserved areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYC FRESH Report

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Example: NYC FRESH program. ● Provide a local SNAP supplement to increase benefits for program participants. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Example: Increase the value of SNAP in the county to compensate, to some extent, for inflation ○ Example: Specifically target SNAP supplements towards the purchase of healthier foods ● Establish policies that would support increased SNAP enrollment among those who are eligible. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This might include policies mandating increased Department of Family Services (DFS) outreach, or enabling SNAP Ambassadors or navigators to provide DFS training and support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● NYC FRESH Market Study ● Evaluation ● Impact of SNAP on Food Insecurity ● SNAP Usage at Fairfax County Farmers Markets
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Agriculture/Food Production & Waste	
Policy Ideas/Notes	Resources
<p>Topics/options for growing food:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Rooftop food production ● Food-scaping - fruit trees and berry bushes ● Not just ag land - indoor hydroponic/fish farm ● Zoning changes <p>Issues/challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Labor ● Overregulation currently - e.g., people should be able to grow food on their own property and sell to neighbors; could there be tax benefits for using your yard to grow food for local consumption? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Need to research Indoor Farms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Beanstalk Farms ○ Area 2 Farms ○ Video of Area 2 Farms' Technology ● Need to research opportunities to use impermanent/modular units to grow food

Institutional Procurement/Business/Labor	
Policy Ideas/Notes	Resources
<p>Food system businesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The permitting and licensing process for new food businesses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To include how permitting and zoning pertain to mobile markets ● The procurement process around food, such as local government purchasing preferences within Fairfax County. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● During the Obama administration, there was a push to streamline such processes via a plan called Start-up in a Day. The group thought it might help fuel some local policy ideas. ● Need to research a variety of the municipalities listed

	to see what they've done to speed up the start-up process.
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Keep in mind that groups only had a few minutes to discuss these large topics. Much more research and discussion will need to take place before this task force selects a policy issue to prioritize.

Homework

Kerri LaCharite

Read the following: <https://healthyfoodpolicyproject.org/key-issues/food-and-nutrition-policy-at-the-local-level-recent-insights-and-emerging-trends>

Explore the following: <https://healthyfoodpolicyproject.org/resources/index-of-local-government-policies-for-to-support-food-access-during-the-covid-19-pandemic>

Next Policy Task Force Meeting: May 21, 2024, 10:00 a.m. – 11: 00 a.m.