



## Food Access & Literacy Work Group Meeting Notes

Fairfax Food Council

May 29, 2024

10:30 am – 11:30 am

### Nutrition Education Updates

#### Katie Strong, Extension Agent

Katie provided an overview of Virginia Cooperative Extension's (VCE) structure as it relates to nutrition programming and her role. She also discussed VCE's opportunity to build an educational building with a garden and hands-on activity space. This space will be called the Arrowbrook Extension Center and will be based in Herndon (near the Dulles Access Road). While plans are not yet finalized, the goal is for this to be a multipurpose space, including a teaching kitchen. Additionally, jobs will become available as this space develops. The hiring process opens toward the end of September 2024, so stay tuned for job description links.

### Montgomery County Food Council

#### Ester Waldroup

Ester presented on the [Nutrition Navigator tool](#), a map that helps people locate healthy, affordable, local foods. The Nutrition Navigator also helps communities uncover new layers of programs and resources within their local food system, including nutrition education opportunities and job training programs in the agricultural and culinary fields. If you'd like to get your program on their map, follow these instructions: [Partner Portal - Nutrition Navigator \(thefoodtrust.org\)](#). If you have any questions, feel free to contact Ester via email at [ester@mocofoodcouncil.org](mailto:ester@mocofoodcouncil.org).

### Introduction and Presentation Feedback

#### Brooke Tresch, Registered Dietician and GMU MPH Practicum Student

Brooke introduced herself and asked for topic suggestions for her July Food Access & Literacy Work Group presentation. The group suggested she cover the following topics:

- Food Safety (including allergy precautions)
- Nutrition for those with diabetes and heart disease
- Helping kids develop healthy relationships with food
- Education materials covering nutrition basics
- Weekend meal kits on a budget
- Tactful approaches to providing basic nutrition info (please address stigma/shame)
- How to include culturally appropriate foods into a healthy diet. (E.g., tortillas and white rice vs brown rice)
- Expiration date education, especially as it relates to donors

If you have a topic you would like Brooke to cover, please email her at [btresch@gmu.edu](mailto:btresch@gmu.edu).

## Farmers Markets and SNAP

### Caroline Hockenberry

The county Farmers Markets are looking for community partners to help them provide SNAP EBT and Matching via Virginia Fresh Match. Currently, the program matches benefits for up to \$40 worth of produce.

Additionally, [Virginia's Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program \(VSFMNP\)](#) provides \$50 in vouchers to approved participants to purchase fresh fruits, vegetables, and cut herbs at participating farmers markets. VSFMNP is looking for more volunteers to help with Spanish translation and interpretation at the markets. These services help to promote the program and determine people's eligibility. Many people face barriers in accessing Farmers Markets (e.g., cost, transportation), so breaking language barriers is one step toward expanding access. Volunteers will be trained by the Fairfax County Park Authority. Those interested in learning more about volunteering (especially at the Wakefield Farmers Market) should email Caroline at [caroline.hockenberry@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:caroline.hockenberry@fairfaxcounty.gov).

## FFC Food Access & Literacy Work Group Members' Announcements

- Diane, FFC: The new FFC newsletter has launched. Be sure to check it out!
- Kate, INOVA: Part-time nutrition educator positions are open at INOVA.
- Bill, Cornerstones: The Food Hub has rescued/received approximately 107,000 lbs of food and redistributed 70,000 lbs so far. Currently, they serve Loudon and Fairfax County. They have 12 partners and are expanding.
- Gill, Capital Area Food Bank: CAFB has [newly translated 7-way cards](#).

**Next Food Access & Literacy Work Group Meeting:** June 26, 2024 at 10:30 a.m.