



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

Governor's Council for Agricultural Development INFRASTRUCTURE AND WHOLESALE MARKETS WORKING GROUP



MINUTES OF MEETING HELD JANUARY 8, 2014

Connecticut Department of Agriculture
165 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT 06106

I. CALL TO ORDER

Shelly Oechsler, working group co-chair, called the meeting to order at 12:45 p.m. In addition to co-chair Herb Holden, other working group members present were Tim Cipriano (Chartwells/Farmington Public Schools Foodservice), Stephen Cop (HPC Foodservice), Mariana Evica (Urban Oaks Farm), Stacia Monahan (Stone Gardens Farm), Joseph Ruffini (Northeast Produce), Ann Simeone (Connecticut Department of Administrative Services), Chad Simoneaux (Gulf Shrimp Company), and Kathy Smith (The Farmer's Cow).

Also present were Commissioner Steven Reviczky (Connecticut Department of Agriculture), chairman, and Henry Talmage (Connecticut Farm Bureau Association) and Dean Gregory Weidemann (University of Connecticut), vice chairs, from the Governor's Council for Agricultural Development, and Stephen Anderson and Linda Piotrowicz (Connecticut Department of Agriculture).

Working group members Chris Bassette (Killam and Bassette Farmstead), Tim Devanney, Jr. (Highland Park Markets), Joe Geremia (Geremia Greenhouse), and Bryan Hurlburt (USDA Farm Service Agency) were absent.

II. GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Co-chair Oechsler provided an overview of the council, its Grow Connecticut Farms strategic plan, and progress to date.

III. INTRODUCTION OF WORKING GROUP ASSIGNMENT

Co-chair Holden introduced the assignments that the Infrastructure and Wholesale Markets working group will be undertaking in 2014: (1) Gathering producer input on wants/needs for processing, aggregation, storage, and associated business models; (2) Identifying and studying models for cooperatives, nonprofits, public/private aggregation, storage, distribution, marketing, etc. He gave a brief history of work and findings leading up to the assignment, and asked members to introduce themselves and provide information about their businesses and thoughts relevant to the assignment.

IV. STRATEGY FOR DEVELOPING DRAFT DELIVERABLES

The group discussed its assignment and came to consensus that it would gather and review additional stakeholder input and examples of aggregation, processing, storage, and distribution models that currently exist elsewhere.

V. TOWN HALL MEETING DAY

The group discussed the upcoming agricultural town hall meeting day scheduled for January 29, 2014, at the State Capitol. A session dedicated to infrastructure and wholesale markets will include a public comment period and a panel discussion. Prior to the meeting, the working group will develop questions for the public comment and panel discussion segments.

VI. RECAP AND NEXT STEPS

Co-chair Oechsler recapped the highlights of the discussion and the next steps, which include working by email to develop questions for the town hall meeting and to gather and review examples of aggregation, etc. models. She and Herb will report back to the Governor's Council for Agricultural Development at its February 4, 2014, meeting, and the Infrastructure and Wholesale Markets working group will meet again on February 27, 2014.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

There was no further business and co-chair Oechsler adjourned meeting at 2:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Linda Piotrowicz
January 8, 2014