

# **Land, People & Natural Resources Subcommittee**

**Progress Report**

**April 2011**

# Charge to Subcommittee from Legislature

---

- Sec. 106-832 (4) In depth analysis of potential impacts of production of local sustainable food on economic development, both **direct impacts for the producers**, and ...indirect impacts...
- Sec. 106-832 (5) and (6) ...information and engagement center/issues regarding the **identification and development of solutions to regulatory and policy barriers**
- Sec. 106-832 (7) ...**strengthen infrastructure and entrepreneurial efforts**
- Sec. 106-830(a) ...preserving open space, decreasing the use of fossil fuel, ...preserving and protecting the natural environment



# Two Areas of Focus for 2011

---

- **Keeping Existing Farms Profitable and in Business**
  - **Suggested Framework in Progress**
  
- **Successful Farm Transition/Successful New Farmers**
  - **Yet to Come**



# Keeping Existing Farms Profitable

---

- **Market Access – existing distribution/purchasing structure can be problematic**
  - Goal: Increase Institutional/Government Purchasing
    - Establish state/local government NC food purchasing goals (e.g. 20% by 2015)
    - Give NC producers opportunity to match lowest/winning bid for government purchases
    - Limit government food purchasing to regional foodsheds as appropriate
    - Ensure vendor lists indicate state & nation of origin



# Keeping Existing Farms Profitable

---

- **Market Access – existing distribution/purchasing structure can be problematic**
  - Goal: Develop Consumer Education Programs
    - Programs aimed at household and institutional/commercial buyers
    - Elements should include:
      - Economic impacts
      - Environmental impacts
      - Food security
      - Food safety



# Keeping Existing Farms Profitable

---

- **Market Access – existing distribution/purchasing structure can be problematic**
  - Goal: Establish Regional/Local Aggregation Infrastructure
    - Hand-off to Economic Development & Infrastructure Subcommittee!



# Keeping Existing Farms Profitable

---

- **Reduced Input Costs – transportation, seed, packing supplies, insurance, etc.**
  - Goal: Establish infrastructure for cooperative purchasing, processing, distribution, insurance, etc.
  - Goal: Government indemnification of farmers for losses due to food safety recalls where the producer wasn't at fault and can show he suffered economic losses (e.g., USDA livestock indemnity program)



# Keeping Existing Farms Profitable

---

- **Stable, Affordable Workforce**
  - Goal: Fix immigration laws!
  - Goal: Thorough review of teen labor laws and creation of guidance for farmers to successfully employ teen labor without violating labor laws
  - State assistance with mediation, arbitration, or settlement (or state assistance in partnership with nonprofits e.g. Grange, Farm Bureau)



# Keeping Existing Farms Profitable

---

- **Increase Availability and Access to Capital**
  - Goal: Establish an SBA for farmers
  - Goal: Develop a method to incentivize private lenders to loan to farmers (Examples: Golden Leaf & Tobacco Trust Fund could establish a revolving loan guarantee fund for agriculture, would ensure private lenders would be made whole if default occurs)



# Keeping Existing Farms Profitable

---

- **Eliminate Unnecessary Regulations and Recordkeeping Requirements**
  - Goal: Review regulations for impacts/outcomes to determine if they are effective or even needed
    - Gather input from farmers across the state regarding burdensome regulatory issues
  - Goal: Review data gathering/record keeping requirements. Look for opportunities for paperwork reduction, limit data collection requirements to that which will actually be used to determine compliance



# Keeping Existing Farms Profitable

---

- **Legislative Reform That Supports Farmland Preservation**
  - Goal: Prevent annexation of farms or inclusion in municipal ETJs (H168)
  - Goal: Require local government utility extension policies to minimize harmful impacts on agricultural land
  - Goal: Ensure farmland protection in condemnation proceedings
  - Goal: Establish an earmarked, recurring funding source for the NC ADFP Trust Fund (if it still exists)



# **Land, People & Natural Resources**

---

**Questions, comments, suggestions?**