

ASAP Marketing Conference

Listening Session Condensed Summary

February 23, 2013

Partner: Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project

About 7 people attended.

NC Local Sustainable Foods Council member present: Debbie Hamrick, NC Farm Bureau Federation.

Opportunity to create knowledge with urban planners. NC APA American Planning Association, NC Chapter. Could be a good place to bring planners together to create more awareness of having smaller, micro farms in urban settings and of farm issues in general.

Source Identity and Focus on Ag at State Run Farmers Markets. One farmer who sells at the Farmers Market in Raleigh, lots of folks are selling other people's stuff. Need product source validation. Enforce the rules on the amount of product being resold and institute inspections of vendors. Transparent process, credentialing and validation process. Also, it's a farmers market; please don't have gift shops that have nothing to do with farm products. An Asheville State Market farmer: , inspection of the farmers at the farmer's market is not really upheld. You don't know if the vendor grew it, or if it's local. No one knows the history. Would like to see inspections of the produce.

Regulation/farmers markets. What are City, County and State regs? In some cases "we get regs in health code that is triple. Especially value added." Can we have someone selling out of a food truck? Value added: most of our stuff is hot food...we have vendors who want to cook food onsite.

Food Safety Modernization Act. Will there be any cost share to help processors of value added products with FSMA compliance? Human assistance/technical service/expertise to help with that?

Inconsistent interpretation in our county of what constitutes agritourism. It could be better clarified, especially in an urbanizing county. Lot of agritourism operations. But not established expertise among county regulators. Got one guy down the road who hosts weddings. We know he is not complying with local and state level laws, local people brush it under the rug as agritourism, but at the same time they enforce inconsistently. At what points does agritourism fall under farm exemption? Plumbing, Parking, Bathrooms, ADA. Also, could there be some level of state education where local health depts.. Can go to ramp up their basic knowledge on farming enforcement issues.

Urban agriculture. The piece of land I want to farm is in the corporate city limits and there are no protections for a farm in the city limits I am at the mercy of the local zoning board. I can't put greenhouse on property, because there is no primary structure and farming is not allowed in a primary residential area. I would have to go to a commercial property, which is way to highly valued. There are several pieces of property. Trying to get him to get present use value....it's in USDA mapped food dessert. Even outside of PUV if there was a way to do it in urban area, it would be to lower permitting requirements. Farmer has to have permits for poultry another one for >6 birds...has to do that for each group of animals and any structures that are built have to have permits and they are temporary use permits.

Extension. Vast majority of extension staff has nothing to do with Ag, they are focusing on social services—isn't that Health & Human Services? Another person. lot of extension is personality driven. The person and the priorities change and if you are not a priority...we have to develop our program around the person.

Ag in Economic Development. Economic incentives that the state gives to lure companies... what's the largest part of the economy? Ag yet we are the red headed stepchild. The companies will come and go, but our farmland can always be here.

Farmers markets. Zoning for startup farmers market. It takes time to get organized at the local level. It shouldn't take 100s of hours to start a farmers market. Another person, McDowell Market came out of a community visioning. Had a farmers market for 2 years ,Farm Bureau, Rural Center and local money, labor by Dept. of Corrections, built a market ½ block from main street right downtown. Lot of folks start out at Farmers Market. McDowell farmer and her mother attended the REAL class. Started w/tailgate market last summer—cupcakes, then started to visit wineries, now they have cheese straws and crackers and candies with the wine from the wineries. They've hit a niche!

EBT at the state farmers markets. We had a hard time finding a business model. Think we can squeeze in under a cooperative. That was a huge problem and a huge cost to have to take on as a market. She added into her grant marketing funds for \$5 coupons. Based on Senior's Farmers market. ASAP has really been a great help: Mountain Tailgate market group.