Montgomery County
Agricultural Zones

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Average cost per acre: $10,171
Median farm size: 27 acres
Average equipment value: $101,435
Acres preserved by easement: 72,172
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“Most of the country's prime farmland is located within the suburban and exurban counties of metropolitan areas. Such "urban-influenced" counties currently produce more than half the total value of U.S. farm production; their average annual production value per acre is some 2.7 times that of other U.S. counties. Yet, ominously, their population growth is also disproportionately high, over twice the national average. Counties with prime and unique farmland found by the Farmland Trust to be threatened by particularly high rates of current development collectively produce some 79 percent of our nation's fruit, 69 percent of our vegetables, 52 percent of our dairy products, and over one-fourth of our meat and grains.” – Kaid Benfield, National Resources Defense Fund
We call it the agricultural *reserve* because we must take extraordinary steps to reserve it. With significant external pressure on this resource we must ask ourselves what steps we can take to make it sustainable without significant intervention. The public will for significant intervention exists now, but there is no guarantee it will be there in the future.
We have to make this part real...
We have to make this part real...

...to this part.
Agricultural Reserve

Kitchen Incubator

Food Hub

Agricultural Reserve
What can a food hub do for Montgomery County?

- Bridges the gap between small-scale producers and larger-scale wholesale operations
- Perform community supported agriculture activities
- Operate “buy local” campaigns
- Job training
- Provide access to nutritious, local food to areas without access
Case Study: Common Market

- $1.7m in sales; 15 employees
- Sources from over 75 farmers in the mid-Atlantic region
- Delivers to over 200 customers
- Operates a 20k sf warehouse with 100k cf of cold storage
- Board includes the CEO of DC Central Kitchen
What can a kitchen incubator do for Montgomery County?

• Provides shared, commercial, licensed kitchen space and equipment to food entrepreneurs
• Provides job training and essential classes
• Provides mentoring and entrepreneur training to start-ups
• Provides access to investors and services to assist in successfully scaling them up
Case Study: Union Kitchen

- Approximately 50 businesses currently under incubation; approximately 200 more are waiting
- Currently based out of 7,300 sf warehouse but build-out for an expansion has begun
- Works with non-profits such as Empowered Women International to provide programming as well as space
- Hires from D.C. reentry programs
Links:

Food Hub Case Studies from the Wallace Center
Kaid Benfield on the Montgomery County Agricultural Reserve
USDA Agricultural Census for Montgomery County
A day in the life at Union Kitchen, The Washington Post
Montgomery County Agricultural Services