

RESOLUTION NO. 54-12

RESOLUTION OF THE MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL, RICHMOND, TO SUPPORT THE FARM BILL PRINCIPLES DEVELOPED BY THE CITY OF SEATTLE THAT SUPPORT OPPORTUNITIES FOR LOCAL AND REGIONAL FOOD INFRASTRUCTURES, INCREASING ACCESS TO HEALTHY, SUSTAINABLE FOODS, AND CALL FOR THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO WORK TOWARD A FARM BILL IN 2012 THAT IS CONSISTENT WITH THESE PRINCIPLES

WHEREAS, jurisdictions throughout California increasingly recognize the benefits of local and regional food production, including stewardship of working agricultural lands, the creation of direct and indirect jobs in agricultural production, food processing, eco-tourism and support industries, improved nutrition due to reduced food travel and storage times, energy conservation and greenhouse gas reductions due to reduced miles to market, and increased food security and nutrition through access to locally grown foods;

WHEREAS, the City of Richmond faces multiple health, social and environmental problems associated with food including dramatic increases in obesity, diabetes, heart disease and other chronic diseases;

WHEREAS, there is a growing recognition of a direct correlation between sustainable food and public health, suggesting that ready access to sustainably-produced food from local and regional farms will help reduce diet-related diseases;

WHEREAS, the Richmond Grocery Gap Report states that approximately 1/3 of Richmond's population, over 30,000 people, reside in "critical food access areas" with limited to no access to a grocer or fresh produce;

WHEREAS, our national food system is dominated by a handful of large buyers; four companies purchase and process 85 percent of all cows raised in the United States, and two companies purchase and process 80 percent of the greens grown in California and Arizona;

WHEREAS, the current food system has led to an unsustainable reliance on chemical inputs and cheap oil for production and distribution, the deterioration of farmlands and water sources and an externalization of numerous environmental problems;

WHEREAS, the City of Richmond has proposed to update its General Plan with a Health and Wellness Element that focuses on increasing opportunities for a healthy diet and lifestyle;

WHEREAS, local, urban agriculture has the capacity to restore use to Richmond's numerous brownfields and blighted, vacant buildings and lots while improving the public health, neighborhood environment and social fabric of the community leading to positive overall health benefits;

WHEREAS, Richmond's proud World War II history was highlighted by "victory gardens" that helped to meet war time food demands, while serving as centers for recycling, information and festivals across the community and provided a foundation that can be built upon today;

WHEREAS, community gardens have been a prominent feature of the Richmond Greenway thus far and have the opportunity to expand as the Greenway continues to develop;

WHEREAS, Richmond elementary, middle and high schools have developed dozens of school gardens that provide youth the opportunity to engage directly in food production and plant and ecosystem science while gaining an understanding of healthy eating habits;

WHEREAS, a 2006 report issued by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (UNFAO) documented that livestock production is a major source of land degradation and water consumption, and contributes 18% of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, prompting Rajendra Pachauri, head of the Nobel Peace Prize-winning

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), to recommend that individuals reduce their personal carbon impact by decreasing their meat consumption and noted that, *"In terms of immediacy of action and the feasibility of bringing about [GHG] reductions in a short period of time, reduced meat consumption clearly is the most attractive opportunity;"*

WHEREAS, the state of California has seen a decline in the number of small and midsized farms of more than 15 percent since 1990; and many small and midsized producers struggle to make a living from farming due to low prices offered by large buyers or because of barriers to accessing the processing and distribution infrastructure that these buyers control;

WHEREAS, agriculture represents an important part of rural and urban economies; and yet farmland, farms and farmers are at risk because of policy barriers and inadequate infrastructure that inhibit direct access to urban markets. There is a clear need for regionally-appropriate technology and infrastructure that can address market barriers and create food industry jobs;

WHEREAS, maintaining and improving the security of a diverse local food supply is essential to local emergency preparedness and regional self-reliance;

WHEREAS, access to sustainably-produced, healthy food can be facilitated by developing the infrastructure necessary to produce food locally and to process, store and ship food from farmers in our region to local markets such as small scale local processing facilities;

WHEREAS, many jurisdictions are witnessing increased need for food and nutrition services provided by federally-funded nutrition and community-based food programs in recent years and access to these programs and services is paramount to addressing food insecurity;

WHEREAS, the City of Richmond has elected to work alongside community based organizations to create the City's first Food Policy Council to address the food injustice occurring specifically within the Richmond community;

WHEREAS, a number of urban agriculture, food security, nutrition, farming and sustainable agriculture organizations and small food businesses in California cities and counties have received grants through programs funded by the federal Farm Bill to carry out their important work of increasing residents' access to healthy, sustainable food;

WHEREAS, these and other programs that connect farmers and consumers, increase food access, promote sustainability and help ensure that family farmers can make a living from farming have been threatened by budget cuts and political maneuvering during the 2012 budget debates in Congress and will likely be threatened again when Congress takes up the next Farm Bill;

WHEREAS, the policies, programs and funding included in the 2012 Farm Bill currently pending before the United States Congress will affect how successful California local governments can be in achieving their goals of improving local food systems, environmental sustainability, economic development, public health, social justice, community resilience and emergency preparedness. Local government have a critical role to play in creating healthy food systems, but federal policies and action significantly impact their ability to fully realize these goals;

WHEREAS, the City of Seattle developed Farm Bill Principles as guidance to the Federal Government as it considers the Farm Bill in 2012 based on the following:

1. Health-centered Food System

The driving principle of the Farm Bill must be the relationship of food and ecologically sound agriculture to public health. Food that promotes health includes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts, seeds, legumes, dairy, and lean protein. Improving the health of the nation's residents must be a priority in developing policies, programs, and funding.

2. Sustainable Agricultural Practices

Promote farming systems and agricultural techniques that prioritize the protection of the environment so that the soil, air, and water will be able to continue producing food long into the future. Integral to both domestic and global agricultural policies should be agricultural techniques and farming practices that enhance environmental quality, build soil and soil fertility, protect natural resources and ecosystem diversity, improve food safety, and increase the quality of life of communities, farmers and farm workers.

3. Community and Regional Prosperity and Resilience

Enhance food security by strengthening the viability of small and mid-scale farms, and increasing appropriately scaled processing facilities, distribution networks, and direct marketing. Develop strategies that foster resiliency, local innovation, interdependence, and community development in both rural and urban economies. Opportunities that create fair wage jobs are key to a strong economy.

4. Equitable Access to Healthy Food

Identify opportunities and reduce barriers by developing policies and programs that increase the availability of and improve the proximity of healthy, affordable, and culturally-relevant food to urban, suburban, and rural populations. Protect the nation's core programs that fight food insecurity and hunger while promoting vibrant, sustainable agriculture.

5. Social Justice and Equity

The policies reflected in the Farm Bill impact the lives and livelihoods of many people, both in the U.S. as well as abroad. Develop policies, programs, and strategies that support social justice, worker's rights, equal opportunity, and promote community self-reliance.

6. Systems Approach to Policymaking

It is essential to reduce compartmentalization of policies and programs, and to approach policy decisions by assessing their impact on all aspects of the food system including production, processing, distribution, marketing, consumption, and waste management. Consider the interrelated effects of policies and align expected outcomes to meet the goal of a comprehensive health focused food system.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE RICHMOND CITY COUNCIL HEREBY DECLARES THE FOLLOWING:

Section 1. Support of the City of Seattle Farm Bill Principles and calls up the Federal Government to work toward a Farm Bill in 2012 that is consonant with these Principles; and

Section 2. Direction for our elected senators and representatives to support programs in the upcoming Farm Bill that rebuild local and regional food infrastructure, support small and midsized producers and ensure that they are fairly compensated by buyers, promote sustainable and urban agriculture, increase access to healthy food, and connect local residents with local farmers through Farmers Markets, Community Supported Agriculture (CSAs), farm share and other programs that support direct sales from farmers to consumers; and

Section 3. Direction for elected senators and representatives to protect funding for programs consistent with the above values in the 2012 budget, including but not limited to the Business and Industry Loan Program, Rural Business Enterprise Grants, Organic transition programs, the National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service, Farmers Market Nutrition Program, Beginning Farmer and Rancher Programs, the Office of Advocacy and Outreach and the Office of Tribal Relations, and conservation programs such as the Conservation Stewardship Program; and

Section 4. Direction for our elected senators and representatives to remove federal subsidies that support industrial farming, including subsidies for animal feed crops such as corn

and soy and instead subsidize foods the federal dietary guidelines urge Americans to consume more of, such as fruits and vegetables; and

Section 5. Direction for our elected federal representatives to support implementation of the Grain Inspection Packers and Stockyard Act rules as mandated by Congress in the 2008 Farm Bill, and expand such protections in the upcoming Farm Bill to ensure that family farmers are paid and treated fairly by the companies that purchase their products; and

Section 6. Direction for our elected senators and representatives to oppose “*Foundation for the Future*” legislation as currently written, which would harm small and mid-sized family dairy farmers and reduce California residents’ access to dairy products from these producers, and to support reforms included in the Federal Milk Marketing Improvement Act; and

Section 7. Direction for our federal lobbyists to take an active role in advocacy for a Farm Bill that reflects and supports the principles expressed in this resolution.

I certify that the foregoing resolution was passed and adopted by the Council of the City of Richmond at a regular meeting thereof held on May 1, 2012, by the following vote:

AYES: Councilmembers Bates, Beckles, Boozé, Butt, Ritterman, Vice Mayor Rogers, and Mayor McLaughlin.
NOES: None.
ABSTENTIONS: None.
ABSENT: None.

DIANE HOLMES

CLERK OF THE CITY OF RICHMOND

(SEAL)

Approved:

GAYLE MCLAUGHLIN
Mayor

Approved as to form:

BRUCE GOODMILLER
City Attorney

State of California }
County of Contra Costa } : ss.
City of Richmond }

I certify that the foregoing is a true copy of Resolution No. 54-12, finally passed and adopted by the City Council of the City of Richmond at a regular meeting held on May 1, 2012.