



King County
Agriculture Commission
Water and Land Resources Division
Department of Natural Resources and Parks
King Street Center
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Seattle, WA 98104-3855
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December 10, 2020

The Honorable Claudia Balducci
Chair, King County Council
516 Third Ave, Room 1200
Seattle, WA 98104

Dear Councilmember Balducci:

The King County Agriculture Commission is concerned about climate change impacts on farming and food businesses including flooding, increased demand for irrigation water, and the challenge of producing food while facing new pathogens, pests and diseases in this region.

The commission supports elements in the 2020 Strategic Climate Action Plan (SCAP) including accelerating acquisitions of farmland preservation program easements, assessing impacts of climate change on King County agriculture, updating the vulnerable roads assessment, expanding use of recycled water, increasing home elevations, flood risk outreach, and participation in disaster relief programs. The commission also supports adopting comprehensive planning for County owned farmland and incorporating regenerative farming practices, increasing PBRs enrollment, supporting immigrant and refugee farming program, exploring benefits of compost, and amending the farm plan public rule to include climate resiliency and preparedness.

While farmers would like to adopt many of these strategies to address climate change, the commission stresses that financial incentives are needed to make that happen. In technology research and development, alternatives to diesel or clean diesel technology is needed for farming and distribution. Resources are needed to fund technical assistance and cost-share programming so that farm and food businesses have the knowledge and financial incentives to adopt SCAP strategic actions. The SCAP plan documented a wide range of public understanding about the impacts of climate change to farmers and the importance of a “climate friendly” agricultural practices. The Commission has long been an advocate for public education regarding agriculture and climate change and this, too, will require resources.

Although not explicitly included in the SCAP update, the Commission encourages the County to further implement strategies that incorporate FDA approved food processing waste into livestock feed. King County leads the state in food processing and there is significant opportunity to re-route landfill waste to livestock operations. The Commission supports the Local Food Initiative and encourages a key link between SCAP to local food consumption and production.

We appreciate the County’s leadership to both reduce greenhouse gas emissions and positioning

landowners to be able to adapt to a changing climate. The Agriculture Commission looks forward to working with staff to fully develop and implement ag-related strategies included in the SCAP, including pursuit of funding options to assist with implementation. We recognize that this plan is only the next step in a steady progression toward a more resilient future and the Agriculture Commission will contribute to future revisions as the science develops and the needs of farmers become more apparent.

Sincerely,



Nayab Khan, Chair
King County Agriculture Commission

cc: Dow Constantine, County Executive, King County
King County Councilmembers
Christie True, Director, Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP)
Mo McBroom, Deputy Director, DNRP
John Taylor, Director, Department of Local Services
Josh Baldi, Division Director, Water and Land Resources Division (WLRD),
DNRP
Pat McLaughlin, Division Director, Solid Waste Division, DNRP
Mark Isaacson, Division Director, Wastewater Treatment Division, DNRP
Katherine Taylor, Government Relations, DNRP
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