

**For Immediate Release**

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## New Map Resource for Local Farmers Released: Reveals Need to Expand Services for Meat Production

[Montgomery Countryside Alliance](#) (MCA) has released a [map of regional meat processing locations](#) in an effort to document current service levels and show potential for more processing locations. "Our local livestock producers have been frustrated with the lack of nearby meat processing and packaging services and have cited long drives and wait times that put undue stress on their animals," says Caroline Taylor, MCA's executive Director. The map, compiled by MCA intern Todd Langstaff, shows that while farmers located closer to the metro areas certainly benefit from increased demand for local food, the resources they need to get that food to market are much further afield. To maintain current farms and build the next generation of farmers, removing this sort of bottleneck from the farm to market system is an important step.

MCA was a proud lead organization of the January 2013 Farming at Metro's Edge (FAME) conference which gathered farmers, educators, environmentalists, local officials and residents to chart a course for a strong Ag. sector and local food system in Montgomery and Frederick Counties.

[The FAME report](#) highlighted a number of ways to increase farmer profitability and local food production- including increased resources for Ag Extension services and better Ag Education for students and the general public. Specific challenges were also identified for small scale table crop and meat producers.

Currently, MCA is answering local land acquisition challenges with our [Land Link](#) program and the meat processing map represents another resource intended to help farmers find the tools to maintain farming as a way of life *and* a career in our metro region. Greg Glenn of Rocklands Farm commented, "resources like this allow farmers, established and emerging alike, to make more informed decisions and more effective use of their time"

The strength of our local food system depends on collaboration and MCA continues to partner with farmers, consumers and local organizations to build on the findings of the FAME report and grow both our cities and our food in balance.

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