



FARFA's LOCAL FOODS AWARENESS DAY: MARCH 9, 2017

Preparing to Meet Your Legislators

We want to make sure that you meet with your own Representative and Senator while in Austin. The best way to do that is to make an appointment ahead of time.

First, call the Capitol Switchboard at [512-463-4630](tel:512-463-4630) or go to <http://www.fyi.legis.state.tx.us> to find out who your State Representative and State Senator are.

When you call the office, introduce yourself and mention the fact that you're a constituent. Tell the staffer that you would like to meet in person with your legislator to discuss the local foods bills this session. Be willing to meet with a staffer if the legislator is not available – staffers often have a significant impact.

Example introduction: "Hi, I'm Jane Doe from [CITY]. I'm going to be in Austin on Thursday, March 9, and I would like to make an appointment to meet with Representative (or Senator) [NAME OF ELECTED OFFICIAL] to discuss the local foods bills. If he/she is not available, I'm happy to meet with the staff person who works on this issue. Is someone available on March 9?"

Preferred times: **Please try to make the appointment for between 11 am and 3 pm on Thursday, March 9.** If it has to be earlier or later, we'll work around it, but it would be best to keep it within that window of time.

RSVP: Let us know whom you are meeting with and at what time. We will use that to help us plan for the whole day.

Attire: Dress so that you, and not your clothes, are the focus. It is best to dress in casual professional clothes, such as dress slacks and button-down shirts (men) or blouses (women). T-shirts promoting local foods or raw milk are okay, but please do NOT have any other "messaging" on your clothes. Also avoid having a flamboyant or messy appearance. You want the legislators to focus on the message about local foods and not be distracted by your appearance. Comfortable shoes are a must.

Logistics and Schedule for Thursday, March 9

When you get to the Capitol, enter the main Capitol building, and take the elevator down to floor E2. Go down the hallway, and the Legislative Conference Center will be on your right, Room E2.002.

(continued on next page)

We have divided Texas into “regions,” and we’ll ask you to take a seat at one of the tables for your region. We’ll have a list of all the counties and the region to which each corresponds, to simplify finding your table.

9-10:30 a.m.: You will hear a short presentation about how to conduct meetings with the legislators, and we will explain the highlights of all of the bills, each of which will have fact sheets that you will distribute to the Legislators and staff members.

10:30-11 a.m.: We will divide into groups of 2-4 people. Ideally, we’ll have a farmer with each group, as well as someone who has talked with legislators before.

11 a.m.-3 p.m.: Meetings with legislators. Each group will receive a list of a few legislators from their region, and you’ll go to those legislators’ offices to meet with them or their staff. When you finish, you can return to the Conference Room to receive more meeting assignments.

3 p.m.: Gather back at the Conference Room to de-brief, share experiences, and talk about the next steps.

Enjoy the day!