



### 50<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Cass Clay Food Commission

September 11, 2024 10:30 am – 12:00 pm  
Location: Fargo City Commission Chambers

- 10:30 am
1. Welcome
    - a. Approve Order & Contents of the Overall Agenda
    - b. Review & Action on Minutes from May 8, 2024 (**Attachment 1**)
    - c. Welcome to New Food Commission Members: John Strand, City of Fargo & Amy Zundel, City of West Fargo
    - d. Mission of the Cass Clay Food Partners
- The mission of the Cass Clay Food Partners is to improve all levels of the community food system and assure that residents have increased access to safe, nutritious, affordable, and culturally-based foods. The Cass Clay Food Partners includes three separate arms: the Cass Clay Food Commission which educates local leaders and discusses food policy issues, a steering committee comprised of key government institutions and local food systems experts that advises the Food Commission, and an action network of area organizations and individuals working together on important food topics in the community.*
- 10:35 am
2. Commission Introductions – Chair Nesemeier
- 10:40 am
3. Steering Committee Updates – Michelle Draxten
- 11:00 am
4. Cass Clay Food Partners Resource Review – Adam Altenburg (**Attachment 2**)
- 11:10 am
5. Cornucopia Garden High Tunnel Presentation – Chani Thorne & Sarah Orr, Concordia College
- 11:20 am
6. Hunger Action Month – Janice Tweet & Nicolina Page, Great Plains Food Bank
- 11:40 am
7. Kudos & Community Recognition – Rory Beil (**Attachment 3**)
- 11:45 am
8. Public Comment Opportunity – Chair Nesemeier (**Attachment 4**)
- 11:50 am
9. Commission & Steering Committee Roundtable: Community Updates & Meeting Reflections – Chair Nesemeier
- 11:55 am
10. Future Meetings & Commission Action Steps
    - a. Next Steering Committee Meeting – September 23, 2024
    - b. Next Action Network Newsletter – October 4, 2024
    - c. Next Commission Meeting – November 13, 2024
- 12:00 pm
11. Adjournment

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Cass Clay Food Commission meetings are taped and rebroadcast on cable channel TV Fargo 56 each Friday at 11:00 am. People with disabilities who plan to attend this meeting and need special accommodations should contact Savanna Leach at Metro COG at 701.532.5100. Please contact us at least 48 hours before the meeting to give our staff adequate time to make arrangements. Meeting minutes are available on the Cass Clay Food Partners website at [www.cassclayfoodpartners.org](http://www.cassclayfoodpartners.org) and Metro COG's website at [www.fmmetrocog.org](http://www.fmmetrocog.org).

# Attachment 1

**49<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the  
Cass Clay Food Commission  
May 8, 2024  
Fargo Commission Chambers**

**Members Present:**

Arlette Preston, Fargo City Commission, Chair  
Heather Nesemeier, Moorhead City Council  
Paul Hankel, Horace City Council (proxy)  
Jim Kapitan, Cass County Commission  
Mandy George, West Fargo City Commission  
Paul Krabbenhoft, Clay County Commission  
Dave Steichen, Dilworth City Council  
Anna Johnson, At-Large Member  
Joan Kopperud, At-Large Member  
Carin Engler, At-Large Member  
Jeff York, At-Large Member

**Members Absent:**

Jeffrey Miller, At-Large Member

**Others Present:**

Michelle Draxten, Fargo Cass Public Health  
Rory Beil, Clay County Public Health  
Rita Ussatis, NDSU Extension  
Noelle Harden, U of M Extension  
Janice Tweet, Great Plains Food Bank  
Erika Franck, Clay County Planning and Zoning  
Eric Hegg, Global Refuge  
Caliton Ntahompagaze, Caliton Family Farms  
Karla Hernandez, C.A.S.A  
Kory Powell, C.A.S.A  
Adam Altenburg, Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Council of Governments

**1a. Approve Order and Contents of the Overall Agenda**

A motion to approve the order and contents of the overall agenda was made by Ms. Kopperud and seconded by Ms. Nesemeier. The motion was voted on and unanimously approved.

**1b. Review and Action on Minutes from March 13, 2024**

A motion to approve the minutes for March 2024 was made by Ms. Kopperud and seconded by Ms. Johnson. The motion was voted on and unanimously approved.

**1c. Mission of the Cass Clay Food Partners**

Chair Preston noted the mission of the Cass Clay Food Partners included as part of meeting agendas in 2024.

**2. Commission Introductions**

Chair Preston led the Commission and steering committee members in a brief round of introductions.

### **3. Cass Clay Food Partners Resource Review**

Mr. Altenburg explained that in the past eight years, the Cass Clay Food Partners had developed nearly two dozen resource documents highlighting urban agriculture, food access, sustainability, and other food systems topic areas relevant to the Fargo-Moorhead area. He noted that these documents have included blueprints, which look at food systems from a land development code perspective; and issue briefs and snapshots, which provide more of an overview of an issue the community may have seen locally.

Mr. Altenburg provided a brief overview of the blueprint developed for Residential Gardening (2020).

### **4. Local Producer Spotlight: Caliton Family Farms**

Caliton Ntahompagaze, owner of Caliton Family Farms LLC, talked about his experiences as a local producer. He explained that he became interested in becoming a producer in 2015 after he found it difficult to find fresh produce native to West Africa. Since 2021, Caliton Family Farms has grown eggplants, beans, beets, carrots, tomatoes, melons, potatoes, kale, squash, and zucchini. He also highlighted his partnerships with the Great Plains Food Bank, to which he sold over 12,000 lbs. of produce, as well as selling at the Red River Market and other locations.

### **5. Community Spotlight: C.A.S.A | Cultura, Amigos, Salud y Ambiente**

Karla Hernandez and Kory Powell informed the Commission about C.A.S.A, a non-profit dedicated to the community empowerment of Latinos in the Fargo-Moorhead area.

Ms. Hernandez and Mr. Powell explained that C.A.S.A. advocates for equitable resources and opportunities for Latinos living in Cass and Clay counties. They noted that the organization coordinates meetings and events to unite, discuss common problems, and evaluate possible solutions. They described that, since its inception in May 2023, they had facilitated three gatherings reaching out to more than 60 families in the area. They noted that these meetings helped to promote a stronger sense of support and belonging in the growing Latino community.

Ms. Hernandez and Mr. Powell informed the Commission that C.A.S.A connects Latinos with social, mental, education, and health services in Spanish and provides translation and interpreting services to help community members navigate the resources they need. Ms. Hernandez also explained that the organization is looking at food access opportunities so that members of the Latino community might have better access to land for growing food and increasing food-based businesses.

### **6. Steering Committee Updates**

Ms. Draxten provided an informational update to the Commission regarding the steering committee's recent activities.

### **7. Kudos and Community Recognition**

Ms. Draxten recognized Commissioner Mandy George for her work in bringing the topic of backyard chickens forward to the West Fargo City Commission and in the passing of a city ordinance on April 1, 2024. She noted that residents in West Fargo are now allowed up to six chickens and join Fargo, Moorhead, and portions of Horace in allowing backyard chickens as a permitted or conditional use.

### **8. Public Comment Opportunity**

Chair Preston informed the Commission that time would be allotted for public comments. She noted that members of the community may also submit comments via a comment link when Commission packets are emailed out.

No additional public comments were made.

### **9. Commission and Steering Committee Roundtable: Community Updates and Meeting Reflections**

Chair Preston asked for the Commission and the steering committee to share any additional updates or meeting reflections.

### **10. Future Meetings and Commission Action Steps**

Chair Preston stated that the next Commission meeting would be held on September 11, 2024. She also noted that the Food Action Network has begun sending out monthly newsletters to provide updates on what is happening in the community.

Chair Preston adjourned the meeting at 11:42 AM.



**To:** Cass Clay Food Commission  
**From:** Adam Altenburg, Metro COG  
**Date:** September 4, 2024  
**Re:** *Cass Clay Food Partners Resource Review*

Since March 2015, the Cass Clay Food Partners has developed nearly two dozen resource documents highlighting urban agriculture, food access, sustainability, and other food systems topic areas relevant to the Fargo-Moorhead area. These documents have included blueprints, which look at food systems from a land development code perspective; and issue briefs and snapshots, which provide more of an overview of an issue the community may have seen locally.

In May 2024, the steering committee provided information from the blueprint on [Residential Gardening](#). This month, the steering committee will present information from the blueprint on [Backyard Season Extenders](#).

All blueprints, snapshots, and issue briefs can be found at the link below:

<https://fargond.gov/city-government/departments/fargo-cass-public-health/health-promotion/cass-clay-food-partners/blueprints>

**Requested Action:**  
**None**



**To:** Cass Clay Food Commission  
**From:** Rory Beil, Clay County Public Health  
**Date:** September 9, 2024  
**Re:** *Kudos and Community Recognition*

Since May 2022, the Cass Clay Food Commission has highlighted individuals and organizations for their work in the Fargo-Moorhead metropolitan area and the broader community. This includes awards and recognitions as well as state and local initiatives that support food systems and the values of the Commission.

In September 2024, the Steering Committee would like to recognize the following:

1. Certificate of Appreciation to Michelle Draxten

The Steering Committee would like to recognize and thank Michelle Draxten for her contributions to the Cass Clay Food Commission for the past three years. Michelle has been a vital part of the local health promotion community for the past eight years, working on childhood obesity prevention, breastfeeding support, and food insecurity and food systems. She has been the co-chair of the Cass Clay Food Partners steering committee since September 2021 and the chair of the Cass Clay Hunger Coalition Advisory board. She has done so much for our communities including:

- Creating a text message breastfeeding support program that enrolled over 1,200 moms, and has been implemented in local and state WIC agencies nationally;
- Developing online breastfeeding and nutrition modules that have provided thousands of childcare providers across the State of North Dakota with free continuing education hours; and
- Supporting nearly 70 local businesses in achieving the state-level Infant Friendly designation.

**Requested Action:**  
**None.**



**To:** Cass Clay Food Commission  
**From:** Heather Nesemeier, Chair  
**Date:** September 4, 2024  
**Re:** *Public Comment Opportunity*

The public comment opportunity is an open forum for the public to provide comments about specific items on this meeting's agenda, as well as any other issues that may pertain to food systems policies or programs. Members of the public may also submit comments online through the comment form link sent out with the meeting's agenda and packet. People may sign up to receive notices about the Cass Clay Food Commission at <http://fmmetrocog.org/get-involved>.

Comments to the Cass Clay Food Commission will be limited to one minute per individual or at the discretion of the Commission Chair.

**Requested Action:**  
**None**