

Auburn Natural Products and Agriculture Working Group

Minutes: 8 30 22 Approved: 12 27 22

Location: Auburn Senior Center

Recorder: Dave Griswold

Staff attending: Rosemary Mosher

Attending: Dave Griswold, Bill Sylvester, Kathy Shaw, Chris Carson, Pam Rousseau, David Bell, Ed Michaud

Excused: Katie Boss, Joe Gray

Absent: None

Guests: Lynn Holland, Maine Cooperative Extension

Call to Order: 6:15 pm

Public Participation: None

1. Lynn Holland gave a presentation on Amyntas “Jumping” or “Crazy” Worms. These worms originate in China and Korea. Initially introduced in 1899, they appeared in numbers in Portland and the Midcoast 2013-14. They are a threat to wildlands. They feed in the upper 2-3 inches of the soil, destroying the duff layer of the forest floor. They change the soil to one which makes it difficult for plants to absorb nutrients and establish themselves. This affects forest regeneration. The soil is also very prone to erosion. It is illegal to import these worms to Maine. They are present in Auburn. To limit spread, remove all soil from plants you want to move to another location. Eggs are spread by capsules in the soil. Share only bare root plants. Consider removing soil from plants you purchase before planting them. Do not purchase composting worms on line. Lynn shared the slide deck and it is posted on the City’s NP&Ag WG page. Maine DACF also has information on its’ website.
2. **Approval of Minutes:** 6 28 22 Minutes approved.
3. **GIS Update by Rosemary Mosher:** Rosemary presented progress to date on our efforts using Quick Capture app to take photos and location data of agriculture activities in Auburn. Joe has access to our maps and Pam will get it. Send any photos or information gathered to them. Rosemary is retiring, and no successor has been identified. The WG thanked Rosemary for her support and assistance.

4. **Position Paper on Agriculture:** Dave's draft concerning potential for agriculture in Maine to become more important and competitive in view of water issues in the West was introduced. It was decided to devote the September meeting to more discussion and development of the draft. The goal is to develop a paper that can be presented to the Council and School Committee. A number of steps Auburn could take to promote agriculture, based on previous discussions, are included in the draft.
5. **Chamber meeting:** Kathy shared that the Chamber Breakfast meeting on Sept 8 topic will be "The Power of the Local Food Economy"

New Business: None

Action Items:

1. Collect photos and descriptions for GIS project. Joe and others

Next meetings: Sept 27

Pending agenda items:

1. Local ag position paper discussion
2. Royal River Land Trust designation of key areas in Auburn
3. Producer survey- Farmed acres and value of product
4. Food Sovereignty Law
5. Good Food Council of L-A to discuss urban agriculture opportunities.
6. Maine Farmland Trust Easement presentation

Adjourned: 7:15 PM

