



### PEOPLE. POWER. PURPOSE.

Farm policy matters to the farmers who work to steward our land for future generations. It also matters to communities who have a right to safe, healthy, nutrient-rich food. And, it impacts the land, air, water, and natural ecosystems that sustain us.

Too often, sustainable and organic farmers—and those of us who count on them—are under threat from policies that support farm concentration and industrial agriculture.

State and federal policies shape our environment, communities, and health—whether we are involved or not. That’s why your voice is needed to make sure public institutions are accountable to people and the planet.

Meeting in-district with your member of Congress (MOC) or state legislator and/or their staff is a great way to build a relationship and ensure your voice and priorities are being heard.

**This is an opportunity to share your story and build power as an OEFFA advocate.**

### REACH OUT TO OEFFA POLICY

OEFFA Policy Staff can:

1

- Help with scheduling a meeting with your representative or staffer;
- Provide background information and help you prepare with talking points and support materials;
- Connect you with other OEFFA members in your district to join the meeting; and
- Attend your meeting with you!

### BUILD YOUR DELEGATION

2

- Invite neighbors and other OEFFA advocates in your district to join the meeting. More advocates (up to five) present make in-district meetings more memorable and influential.
- In-district meetings are great opportunities to bring new advocates to the table to share their stories, and build power and community.

### PREPARE

3

- Schedule a meeting with OEFFA Policy staff and your delegation to prepare and define talking points and each person's role in the meeting, and review any relevant background information.
- Consider the roles of your delegation: one person introduces OEFFA, others handle legislative topics, another makes the ask and offer and says thanks.

### PERSIST AND CONFIRM

4

- After you call to schedule the meeting, you can follow up with an email thank you and confirmation. If the request is still in process, send a brief note saying you look forward to their response in the coming days.
- If your phone call or email doesn't yield a call-back and confirmation in a week or two, continue to reach out. It's normal for this to take several polite but persistent efforts.

### SHAPE YOUR STORY

5

- Think about what personal stories you have that can be shared to illustrate your needs.
- Remember, you are the expert of your own experience.
- Consider these questions when crafting your story:
  - What is the issue or problem? How does it relate to your life/experience? What needs to change?

# 6

## FOLLOW UP IS KEY

- Send a thank you/follow up e-mail to the person you met with and mention specific information from your meeting to jog their memory
- Provide follow-up information on any questions they may have asked
- Let them know that you'd like to stay in touch, and once again, offer OEFFA as a resource

# COMMON IN-DISTRICT MEETING AGENDA

## INTRODUCTIONS

- Each delegate introduces themselves and, in a sentence or two, explains why they are OEFFA members and why they care about the issue.
- One delegate introduces OEFFA's history and vision.

## MAKE IT CONVERSATIONAL

- Ask the MOC if they shop at a local farmers' market or if they hear about food and farm policy issues often. Their answers will help inform how familiar they are with agriculture and may guide the basis of your relationship and conversations.

## MAKE YOUR POINT

- The main purpose of your meeting will be to discuss OEFFA's policy priorities and build a strong relationship with the people who represent you.
- You'll share specific talking points you've defined with OEFFA staff and more importantly, your story.
- Most meetings cover 1-3 specific policy "asks" that you would like the member to take a stance on or consider supporting.

## MAKE YOUR ASK

- Close your meeting by asking for the MOC's support, signature, or sponsorship of legislative agenda items.
- Offer yourself and OEFFA as a trusted ally: OEFFA'S membership includes farmers, eaters, and advocates from all walks of life.
- Tell your MOC or staffer that OEFFA can provide any information they need to stand by OEFFA's policy agenda. When making your ask, you may not have all the answers to their questions, that's ok, don't try and fake it. Say you don't know, but will find out and get back to them.
- Leave your own and an OEFFA Policy staffer's contact information behind. You can follow up with info to help inform their position on the issue.

## SHARE GRATITUDE

- Respect is essential—whether you have your MOC's support or not, or if you voted for them. Thank them for their time and for representing the constituents in their district who support OEFFA

## DEBRIEF AND FOLLOW UP

- Schedule some time with your delegates to debrief and make future plans.
- Email OEFFA Policy Staff (if they didn't attend the meeting) with notes, comments, or actions they should follow up on.
- Send a thank you note within 2-3 days to the MOC or legislative staffer you met with and include any follow-up information.