



# Maryland Green Registry

## 2019 Leadership Award Winner Founding Farmers



### About Founding Farmers

Farmers Restaurant Group, headquartered in Kensington, Maryland, is majority-owned by the family farmers of the North Dakota Farmers Union. It has seven restaurants and a distillery in the District of Columbia, Maryland, Virginia, and Pennsylvania, including the MoCo Founding Farmers in Potomac, Maryland.

### Achievements

**Waste Reduction:** The Green Restaurant Association, which has awarded three stars to the MoCo Founding Farmers, estimates that 90% of the restaurant's waste is diverted from landfills. By serving free, filtered water in reusable glass bottles, offering scratch-made sodas and draft beer, and using bio- and marine-degradable straws, the MoCo Founding Farmers prevented more than a quarter of a million plastic and glass bottles and more than 300,000 plastic straws from entering the waste stream in 2018. The restaurant group also works closely with its suppliers to reduce packaging, which has led to the use of reusable plastic totes and the elimination of plastic collars on six-pack cases. The restaurants also use reusable containers for take-out food.

**Composting:** Almost all food waste is composted. In 2018, this amounted to 280,800 pounds.

**Green Building:** All Founding Farmers restaurants are U.S. Green Building Council LEED certified. The MoCo Founding Farmers is LEED-certified Silver.

**Our Last Straw:** The restaurant group launched a non-profit, Our Last Straw, in June 2018 to eliminate the use of plastic straws across the restaurant and hospitality industry. With over 200 partners and growing, it has been credited with helping establish local plastic straw bans.



The Maryland Green Registry Leadership Awards recognize organizations that have shown a strong commitment to the implementation of sustainable practices, the demonstration of measurable results, and the continual improvement of environmental performance.