

Indiana Grown Commission Meeting
January 27, 2016
One North Capitol, First Floor Conference Room, Indianapolis
9am – 3pm

Commission Member Attendees:

Ted McKinney
Deb Trocha
Cheryl Carter Jones
Jodee Ellett
Pete Eshelman
Mark Straw
Bob White
Chris Baggott
Jeanette Merritt

ISDA Staff:

David King
Suzi Spahr
Ben Gavelek
DyNishia Miller
Melissa Rekeweg

Ted McKinney gave welcome and overview of agenda.

Melissa Rekeweg provided details on changes to staffing, especially to the Econ Dev team.

David King - 2015 Overview

- Logo allowed Indiana Grown to be differentiated based on their specific operations in Indiana
- Business Plan Completed
- Completed the Application
- We have started to do some gathering of metrics - Commission members are concerned that we do not have the data/story to back up the work Indiana Grown is doing. Explained that we are working to gather the metrics, and it takes time to see the economic growth.
- Had Kroger food show to allow Kroger to see the options available with Indiana businesses and producers, they added over a hundred products to their shelves from those businesses. Commission members would love to see numbers to see the success of food shows such as the Kroger show/FFF show. Commission members want more data.
- Have agreements with the retailers for no fees for shelf space. Continuing issues with stocking the shelves in a good turn-around time.

- Suggestion for dual application with other organizations (eg: Indiana Artisan)
- Concern with consolidation of raw products for the future. It is best to start with the shelf stable, value added products, but it needs to be something to keep in mind for growth.
- Pete is seeing a pivot for the Commission - revisit the business plan and think strategically about where Indiana Grown is going.
- Suggestion for a strategic meeting for legislative planning and business plan revamp.

Producer Presentations

- Urban Ladle (Marcie Doublas & Lisa Sprunger) - their soups are in 38 Kroger stores, butcher shops, and 1 Market District, their assistance came in the connections to buyers and retailers.
- Sunrise Orchards (Bill Kerscher) - Local produce grower. They also act as a local food hub regionally and work with local growers to aggregate. They end up being reliant upon the retailer for some of their product to identify as Indiana produced, which is a difficulty. They would love access to Meijer and Giant Eagle. Challenge with restaurants was getting paid in a timely manner.
- Creighton Brothers (Jason Nichols) - processing facility for their eggs. Great relationship with Marsh - they supply all the eggs and the Indiana Grown logo is on the carton. They would like to see the shelf identifiers since the cartons are stacked and the logo can be hard to see. Just built a new visitor center. They also have a feed mill and farm acreage. The value for them is having the consumer value and perception of helping the local community.
- Healthy Hoosier Oil (Mark Boyer) - they do all the growth and production on their farm. They are in 17 retail stores and several restaurants use their oil. The only thing that sets them apart from others in the store shelf is the 100% Indiana Grown label. They have been able to get into markets which were not an option before. They also appreciate the opportunity to mix with other producers and help each other.
- Jen's BBQ Sauce (Johnny and Jennifer White) - they believe Indiana Grown is the reason for their growth. They have had issues with co-packing.
- Bee Free Bakery (Mike and Jennifer Weise) - Indiana Grown has opened doors for them. They are in talks with Kroger to potentially go national. Indiana Grown has facilitated a community for the entrepreneurs/producers to collaborate. Suggestion from Commission to do an event to allow the producers to meet and continue networking.
- Charlie's Premium (Derrick Carlisle) - relatively new, and very new to Indiana Grown, but they have seen great success with the Fantastic Food Fest and they moved ahead in growth with a growth that would typically take 6 months.
- Commission thoughts on Producer Presentations - great to hear all the doors which have been opened. Need to be sure we continue to keep awareness of the need for additional processing. The new phrase they heard was the "community" which has been created for the producers and members. Need to also look at the need for processing and additional livestock inspection - the members indicated the processing/co-packing issue is a large issue for them.

Website Review – Ben Gavelek

- Ben added a search by last name and farm name, add an alphabetical listing.
- Presented many other ideas, some limitations on design.
- Why not add a keyword/product search?
- Use a zipcode to find what is in the surrounding area.
- Want to be able to find out where to get the products - distinguish as a retailer.
- Change the background language for issues to make it user friendly.
- Get BOAH listings of processors - have them be members.
- Change the colors of dots for markets/producers/etc. Make it searchable.
- Can we reevaluate the focus to have a little more of a public face.
- Report mechanism for errors.
- Follow up on issues - Purdue Local Food not showing up on the website.
- Featured member of the week? Or new members of each week?
- Need analytics.
- For facebook - user generated content. Have the members generate their own info and tag Indiana Grown. Change the photos at the front.
- Consider a new platform for the website

Update from Dittoe – Britny Kalule

- Members have been making news throughout the state. tv segments, print, all earned media.
- Chris Baggott recommended we all use the same data and talking points.

2016 Upcoming plans – Suzi Spahr

- Fantastic Food Fest - great reviews from the 50+ members who attended as exhibitors. Widely attended.
- Indiana Horticulture Congress – ISDA staff presented 3 times on Indiana Grown
- Homegrown by Heroes - Scheduled press conference which will include Governor, military personnel, veteran-farmers – Feb 29
- Small Farms Conference - ISDA is a sponsor, Indiana Grown will be the exhibitor, Mar 3-5
- State Fair - Exhibiting at the fair, possibly having a “store” for selling Indiana Grown products, Culinary competition which will focus on Indiana products.

Next Steps – David King

- David outlined the projects he is currently pursuing.
- Suggestion from the group to foster the community of producers and create educational opportunities for the group as a whole.