

Indiana Grown Commission Meeting  
11/30/17

Meeting began at 9:00 AM

People in attendance:

Robin Kitowski  
Bill Kercher  
Bob White  
Thom England  
Mark Straw  
Craig Baker  
Roy Ballard  
Jolene Ketzenberger  
Curtis Hansen  
Marcus Agresta  
Suzi Spahr  
Melissa Rekeweg  
Heather Tallman  
Dana Kosco

Lt. Governor Crouch  
Rebecca Kasper

Not present:  
Jodee Ellett

Welcome

- Lt Governor Suzanne Crouch

Commission Appointment Review

- See packet that was mailed to you
- Want to point out that IG along with ISDA is not a regulatory entity. We are seen as support and advocate for agriculture in Indiana. This commission is advisory based.
  - IG does not police their members but if they do get a report of something that is not right, it is handled right away.
    - Perfect example is there was an issue with watermelons in Kroger that were not grown in the state but were in the IG display
    - Most issues come from a gap in education among other people that are not commission and not the producer- aka store workers
- IG staff at ISDA will be in charge of implementation of decisions

- There is no fiscal responsibility from commission but would be happy to have input
- Formal vote could happen, but hasn't happened much in the past
- IG program has diverse membership, want to include traditional agricultural along with organic. Want to include large farmers and small, etc. want a good representation of diversity in Indiana agricultural
- Memo in folder at your seat- commission not required to follow open door policy. Currently all board meetings are open to the public but if private discussion is desired that can be done.
- The last commission group did decide to have call in option available. With that, whoever is on the phone will not be able to take part in vote
  - Quorum is not required and would not cause a certain number of participation
- Legislative Awareness
  - As a member of the commission you would be speaking as a voice of the commission. We ask that you be very aware before stating opinions/beliefs
    - Specifically applies when speaking to a legislator
  - This has not been an issue in the past but wanted to bring it to an awareness
  - All legislative matters will be ran through Jeff Cummins (ISDA Policy Director) including budget requests
  - If you are contacted by a member of the media we encourage you to speak to them but we also have a communication staff that can assist. Ben Gavelek, ISDA Communications Director.
    - If you do get a request for an interview we prefer that Ben be contacted prior. If you are at an event where a mic gets shoved in your face unexpectedly, please contact Ben after it happens to make him aware.
- Ethics Training
  - It is required to complete, it is required for all special appointed state board members. It is to avoid any conflicts of interest. Ethics training is also required to be completed by all state employees. Erin Sheridan is the ethics officer for the LG's division.
- Mileage reimbursement
  - Were sent in packet that was mailed to you. Please turn in our W9 form and Direct Deposit form.
  - Also see reimbursement form in folder, will need to sign the document at the bottom
  - If you do not wish to be reimburse, please send an email to Suzi stating this request.
- IG staff and Commission roles

- The purpose of this packet is for reference and guidance on who plays what roles. We really want high level participation from our board.
- ISDA staff break down
  - Currently searching for a director, Ted McKinney was asked to serve in DC
  - The only piece that is regulatory in ISDA is our Grain License Agency. They audit entities that purchase grain from producers
  - Indiana Grown falls under the Economic Development Division at ISDA
    - There is a cheat sheet document in the folder that breaks down the positions of the IG staff and what their roles are
  - We have two IG contractors that are paid for by the Specialty Crop Block Grant funds. Both have specific focus on members that focus on specialty crops
    - Jen D
    - Julie G
    - They act as more boots on the ground and are able to reach farther producers in the corners of the state
  - There is a national ag tourism association that has selected Hamilton Co to host convention in 2019. Conference will take place in February.
    - Kimmi will play a large part of this conference.
    - IG role will be assisting selection of AgTourism locations for them to visit while they are here.
  - Morgan Gadd- is a contract employee that is working with Food Safety (FSMA)
    - She is helping with outreach- informative
    - It is a 6 year grant, we are in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year. Unfortunately it is a year by year grant the feds could stop the grant at any time
    - Heather works closely with a lot of producers, and is constantly connecting them with Morgan
    - IG does not want to be seen as the police entity of Food Safety
    - Connection to Lt Gov Family of Business
      - We report to the LG and inform her staff on what we are doing but we also inform the Governor's office as well. We also attend meetings with his staff as well. It is a testimonial to how valuable agriculture is in the State of Indiana

## Where have we been?

- Calendar of events
  - See 2 docs in folder for 2017 goals and duties and 2017 event details
  - Fantastic Food Fest
    - Had a large attendance and went very well. This is a direct sell to consumer opportunity
      - Sample and sell to consumers
    - Has generated a lot of public media and awareness to IG producers
  - State house legislator event
    - Opportunity to highlight what IG does directly to legislators to show what has been going on
  - IG has seen a lot of growth- started around 500 members this year, and now at about 940 members
  - Ivy Tech Culinary school sampling was a great event. Many people came just for networking opportunity
    - Buyer show- it was an event to get them out in the faces of the buyers
  - Monumental Marketplace
    - It far surpassed our expectations. Very diverse attendees and estimated about 4,000 attendees
    - Gov Holcomb declared 7/7/17 has official Indiana Grown Day
    - Secured more than 67 pieces of exposure for our members
    - Expenses included- security, trash cans and a few flats of water for volunteers
  - State Fair
    - 17 days of fun! Stage and sample center kept more than 37 members busy during the fair
    - We also were able to sell member products in the store
      - This was the first year that we ran it, Marsh handled it in the past
      - Even with no retail experience staff was able to pull off the store and it was a great success. Next year there are plans to move the store and make it bigger.
      - It had a great response- very high rate of sales. By the first weekend, had to call several members to request more product

- Producers set their own wholesale and retail price
  - There was some expense, but were able to keep them fairly low
    - Were able to borrow cash register from DNR
  - Products were not just food, there was also many body care products and craft products.
    - Had great programming but we didn't know what to expect since this was a first year
- Hosted first Coffee Connect at Bent Rail Brewing
  - Like wine and beer sampling but with coffee
  - It was a great opportunity to sample products from Indiana roasters and then purchase items
- Emerging Brands Forum
  - Had a lot of educational and informative meetings in the AM and then sampling of products in the afternoon
- Many of these events were farm saving opportunities for some of our members
- Member growth and Future Plans
  - Kroger signage
    - We created a new look for Kroger branding. Now you will see IG branding that includes signs and floor graphics, photos, banners, etc.
    - Moving from kiosk program to regular shelf items
    - Optimistic it will be a good thing for IG members
  - Pilot Project with Target in Greenwood store
    - Have a few products in the store currently but this is an ongoing project
  - Looking into expand member products to be sold in the IND Airport
    - Founding Fathers Restaurant – South Dakota grown products along with Maryland and Virginia (Future Plans?!? Restaurant in downtown Indy?!?)
      - Owners are SD farmers and using a prime operator to run restaurant
  - 2017 has been a good year for relationship building
    - Want to continue to provide more connections for our members
  - IG logo
    - Can now be seen on one of the Albanese billboard

- Can now be seen on many of the Piazza delivery trucks
  - Eskanazi Hospital partnership
- Commission Testimony
  - Ivy Tech Mission to educate students on impact of using local food and how to develop menus around local foods
- Website update
  - Provided presentation on screen
  - All members have access to the website and can add and edit to their individual profile on the website. Dana has been working with members to get content up
    - She has also been helping organize posts for the blog
    - Any blog post that was used is also linked on the website
  - Have added a member counter that shows how many current IG members there are
  - Wholesale search is internal but on the website you can search by different products
  - In the future hope to have a consumer facing search for local foods.
  - In the future hope to have a member research page that will provide resources for members that include contact information
- PR Update – Dittoe
  - Vanessa and Sophie from Dittoe
  - Have been working with IG since summer of 2015
  - They work on media relations for IG, see handout for media analytics. They work on earned media only. (Free Media- not advertising)
    - Includes anyone mentioning Indiana Grown
    - Any events that IG is part of is tracked in analytics
    - Member success stories are also tracked
      - Have been able to reach out to those members and make story about IG
  - Would like to continue to share these types of stories, encourage members to reach out to get their story out
  - Side note: IG has secured grant funds to work with WFYI to create PSAs

#### Budget Review

- See handout in folder

- IG was originated with no funds from the general assembly. Through ISDA we were able to use some funds from the department.
  - Since then we have been given funds
  - Looking to hire a consultant to work on paid media

#### Future Planning

- Input on objects for 2018?
  - Doing a great job with pushing retail. But not having as much success in restaurants. We are looking for feedback on direction.
    - Want more local product on the menus. Local products are being used but not putting it on the menu.
    - Can't put everything on menu without making it a book. It is up to the restaurant to tell the story of the local products
    - Doesn't feel like average consumer cares if product is local, or if it is who the local producer is
    - The issue is not getting food to food service, it is restaurants getting to tell the consumer the story. Not just on menus but other literature in the restaurant
    - Kentucky Proud promotional program was to push advertisement and push/build brand awareness. End result was to build market awareness.
    - There has been a misconception that local is better among chefs
    - Restaurants have been forced to cut costs and a lot of times those costs are cut in the menu. Chefs want best products for flavor, taste, etc. also want products that also carry the most weight. Want products that are going to be notarized in the most markets, not just the local market.
    - Is restaurants something we should continue to peruse?
      - By holding up other areas of IG program it will eventually trickle into the restaurant markets. Restaurants want to promote themselves, but the members being their own marketers it will then trickle into the restaurants
  - For the first time will be participating in the NRA show in Chicago. This is all paid for by grant funds
    - Producers can get a cheaper registration if go through with Indiana Grown
  - Would be great to work with small producers and provide them mentoring and education to get them to the next level and become tomorrow's large producers

- Want to support young upcoming farmers, also want to support no tech members
- Might be interesting to see the marketing that is done by other similar entities such as Kentucky Proud, California Dairy, etc.
  - Learn from these other groups
- Reenrollment program? It would provide information on who wants to remain active. It would also increase the vitality of growth metrics
- Food safety issues with Farm to School programs. And education around food handling

#### Closing

- If you have an idea anytime between now and next meeting, don't hesitate to reach out to staff to share your thoughts
- Suzi will send out email about meeting times for next meeting, keep a lookout for that.

Meeting adjourned at 12:00 PM