

## Indiana Grown Mtg

May 30, 2014

- Started with roundtable introductions
- Tony Hahn
  - Discussion started in 2007 for state branding effort, shelved in 2008
  - Restarted talks in 2010 to look at efforts from other programs
  - No consensus among states, programs are very diverse and dependent upon each state's goals
  - Tony currently does DigIN program (Taste of Indiana), links producer/restaurant to consumer
  - Supply chain btw the three is fragmented, although demand is currently there. DigIN provides some of the connection and is effective at the festival level.
  - They plan expansion to education events raising awareness of local foods.
  - DigIN is not using a branding effort currently but allows each local producer to provide their own brand.
  - Important to consider - what are you accomplishing? Increasing demand, higher revenues to farmer, or for some other promotion?
- Mark Straw
  - He worked with Kentucky Dept of Ag in 1997 when they started process to assist state's farmers to access local markets (through grant program).
  - Good program, was then expanded/redefined to branding efforts
  - Was Kentucky Fresh originally, became Kentucky proud. Very important to consider what these labels mean to the consumer. "Fresh" had certain connotations, but the infrastructure/components was not there, and a Proud initiative already was in existence
  - What will it mean? What will it stand for? What will it represent? Will it compete with other brands? (DigIN, Honest To Goodness Indiana)
  - Very difficult to separate brand in state government from being Administration specific. Any connections may have some questions – keep focus on brand and not the people
  - Likely to have limited financial resources.
  - B/c of limited nature of # of employees in local enterprises, Econ Dev will not likely be directly involved b/c they don't see the benefit (and not understand ag processes). Tourism indicated they can bring in the Econ Dev b/c it can add dollar benefit as well with tourism.
  - Kentucky had benefit of tobacco settlement dollars.
  - Two targets – small local producers (don't require much resources other than hand holding, very vocal) and traditional ag/value added (will use the brand in food products created in the state)

- How do you form linkages/cooperative efforts to expand brand coverage and coordinate with others for mutual benefit (other groups do marketing/branding if provided with materials)
- Think about all steps along the food chain (Caito foods, Piazza produce)
- When it comes to the brand, what does it mean to each individual consumer? One segment wants it to be small farmer/organic/etc., others just want to know it was in Indiana. One segment will not see benefit from “corporate agriculture.”
- One brand with multiple connotations – need to have brand that has true “good feelings” but does not allow it to be pigeon-holed.

How do we overcome fragmented supply chain?

Need to stay above the political fray – only way to be successful and provide longevity.

If you can expand your consumer base, coverage can be beyond the food aspect but becomes part of the culture and lifestyle. Consumer is key to the sustainability.

What is the perception of “local?” What is the experience/stamp of approval? Most people tend to believe local means small. Be careful how it is positioned so it’s not alienating.

Produced vs. processed – key feature to consider – not all of the product may be an Indiana product, how to define Indiana Grown?

Did Kentucky Proud ever discuss “double program” of small, locally grown vs. larger commercial productions? Answer – yes, part of the shift from Kentucky Fresh to Kentucky Proud.

What about other producers? CountryMark? Answer – not sure. Kentucky Proud was built around agricultural products. Discussion should occur b/c it could be a turn off for some individuals/consumers. Can always consider a spin-off program, but the spin-off can cannibalize the original or add consumer confusion.

Oversight issues in other programs? It’s a matter of not policing the brand, but keeping it up and it will begin to police itself. At the larger level, need to form relationships to keep integrity. Provide info on criteria for program as well as need info on removal from the program.

AURI (Agricultural Utilization and Research) – great program to use as a reference.

Discussion at the beginning to not necessarily being an overarching branding program, but be a resource hub to all the individual to brand themselves. Likely should consider it as co-branding to add branding identity.

How much would you suggest asking financially from the budget – answer: two components. Need some to be a part of standard ISDA budget to keep people in for the long term. Other part – one time allotment of \$10M which could be spent over longer period of time. Other opinion to add large funding increase to both ISDA and Tourism to add big econ dev piece.

Need to demonstrate the benefit of investment in Indiana production. **DO** - Connie sharing existing econ dev projections if more Indiana products were used.

Remember that it is a finite market (besides population increase) so any increase in Indiana grown product will take product sales from another source.

You won't have the small producers involved if the fees are too high to participate. Show them what the program will provide to them.

What are objectives for the next month?

**DO** – Market Research

Find small wins, engage with companies now. Are you interested/are you on board? Can you buy into it and help promote?

Ask companies/people how they would use it. Engage with the entire food chain to have information to bring to the Commission at the start.

**DO** – Laura should contact Indiana Kitchen, Piazza Produce, current Indiana Grown members, Indiana Packers, Neil Mosley, Baesler's Markets, Marsh, Kroger, Wegman's, Goose the Market, Bluebeard, Libertine, Bob Shaver