Commission Meeting Minutes
December 16, 2020

COMMISSION: Thom England, Nathan Shoaf, Bill Kercher, Seth Grant, Bob White, Michael Gillum, Natasha Cox, Marcus Agresta

ISDA STAFF: Leah Harmon, Shelby Huff, Dana Kosco, Heather Tallman, Bruce Kettler, Regan Herr

WELCOME

ATTENDEE UPDATES:

Shelby Huff:
• Moving into legislative session:
  o New pesticide civil penalty bill
  o Carbon farming summer study – expecting a few pieces of legislation
  o There will be a bill on Indiana Gasohol
  o Broadband

Director Kettler:
• CARES
  o CARES dollars have been allocated to small scale meat processors
  o ISDA received 61 applications, 41 projects were awarded
  o All $4 million was allocated. The program was a matching program so in total $8 million is being allocated to small scale meat processors this year
• Economic Development Team
  o Businesses are coming to ISDA and IEDC about bringing new technology and agriculture into the state (ex: leafy greens)

Thom England:
• Seeing lots of changes and people adapting to those changes
• Ivy tech is virtual for first two weeks in January and then hoping to return to in person

Nathan Shoaf:
• Gearing up for Small Farms Conference | March 5th and 6th
• New curriculum on Urban Farming @ State Fairgrounds
• Program starting with NRCS and SWCDs on urban soil heath
Bill Kercher:
- Great peach crop and some apples
- Great attendance each weekend on the farm – could be record breaking
- Concerned with the future of the USDA Food Box program – makes it difficult to plan ahead
- They are taking a conservative approach to planting
- They saw a very large increase in demand for prepackaged goods (ex. sealed package of sweet corn)

Seth Grant:
- Continuing food distributions in Marion County
- Utilizing Farmers to family food boxes but anticipating that going away at end of month
- Have received funding from Eli Lilly to get them through the end of 2021
- Trying to move the food pick up indoors if possible
- Focusing on how they can support locally owned restaurants and front-line staff
- Feeding our front-line staff meals from locally owned restaurants
- Preparing for vaccine distribution
- Looking forward to continuing the farmers market in the spring

Bob White:
- INFB is getting ready for the general assembly
- Keeping an eye on: Carbon Bill, update and modernize the home vender
- Expecting 2021 to look a lot like 2020 in the regulatory world

Michael Gillum:
- Started a new business farm fresh produce
- Sell wholesale produce

Natasha Cox:
- Lending is at a record high
- Land values are holding strong
- Happy to help members in any way!

Marcus Agresta:
- Business has slowed again
- Hopeful for future with the vaccine
- Looking for some more government relief

Lieutenant Governor Suzanne Crouch:
- Excited to announce the launch of the Indiana Grown Online Marketplace
COVID-19 UPDATES:
- Consumers have a newfound appreciation for local food in 2020

CURRENT PROJECTS/SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGNS:
- Winter Farmers Market Public Media Campaign
- Interactive Shop Local Map (partnership with IU Center for Rural Engagement)
- Instagram Member Takeovers – every Tuesday
  - Began in September and full schedule through March
- Five on Fridays – every Friday
  - Blog post about a business on Indiana Grown website and social media
- Shop Indiana Grown Online Marketplace –
  - Launched on Monday 12/14/2020
  - Partnership Indiana Small Business Development Center
  - Selected some vendors who were already in the ecommerce space for the launch
  - Eventually will have delivery and pick up options as the online marketplace grows

UPCOMING ITEMS:
- Indiana Grown Member Buyer’s Guide – using funds from SCBG Grant to create
- Food Council Development Grant – open to all established food councils
- Food Safety Assistance – working with Purdue and Safe Produce IN to get more members GAP certified

OPEN DISCUSSION:
- Director Kettler: Help us understand the opportunities are for growth for Shop Indiana Grown.
  - Heather: It will be marketed just as a store. Helpful to vendors not familiar with technology. Start small and grow carefully. Have Indiana be an example for other states.
- Director Kettler: Can vendors have sales and specials?
  - Heather: Yes. Vendors have full control of pricing, discount codes, upsell and cross sell.
- Regan Herr: Is there a cap on products they can upload?
  - Heather: No but currently asking them to limit their products to 5-10 to start.
- Michael Gillum: Excited about the store and buyer’s guide. Would like to see the budget.
  - Heather: Will send budget to commission.
- Marcus Agresta: Each vendor is responsible for their own shipping?
  - Heather: Yes and SBDC can help get them become ecommerce ready.

SOCIAL MEDIA UPDATES:
- In September Indiana Grown’s Facebook page was wrongly accused of violating Facebook Community Standards – continually reporting but no luck as of yet.
  - This limits posts that can be shared, and followers can not share many of our posts.

MEETING ADJOURNED – 2:30 P.M.