

NWMI Food and Farming Network Business Meeting Minutes
1/18/17

***In attendance:** *Wendy Wieland* of MSU Product Center, *Bill Palladino* of Taste the Local Difference, *Meghan McDermott* of Groundwork Center, *Adam McMarlin* of Cook's House, *Evan Smith* of Cherry Capital Foods, *Jen Harris* of Crosshatch Center for Art and Ecology, *Kelly Lively* of Cherry Capital Foods, *Brian Bourdages* of Tamarack Holdings, *Elise Crafts* of Networks Northwest, *Rod Robinson* as Agri-business Task Force leader, *Heather Ratliffe* of Cherry Capital Foods, *Tasha Lapinski* of Baker College, *Rachel Salinas* of Baker College, *Sharron May* of The May Farm, *Steve Nance* of Oryana, *Sarah Eichberger* of MSU Extension, *Maddy Baroli* as Americorps VISTA for FFN.

***Grant Updates**

- **Wendy- Opportunity: USDA Ag Marketing Service Grant and USDA Value Added Grants**
 - Farmer's Market and local food promotion grants. Includes agri-tourism opportunities. Available to both non-profits and businesses.
 - MSU will be offering webinars to help people navigate the application process, look out for them next month.
 - <https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants>
- **Meghan- Opportunity: NWMI Health Department Greenspace Improvement RFP**
 - Apply for up to \$20,000 for the implementation of sustainable and equitable infrastructure, policy, and educational changes to public greenspaces, such as parks and trails.
 - <http://nwhealth.org/gip.html>
- **Meghan- Rotary Grant**
 - Groundwork received funding to develop a Culinary Medicine Program and offer a conference in August.
- **Bill- Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development**
 - Taste the Local Difference received \$25,000 to support their NE Michigan local food coordinato.
- **Sarah, Tasha, Rachel- TenCon Health Plan**

- Kalkaska and Cadillac both received \$5,000 awards to promote healthy eating, physical activity and tobacco cessation. Kalkaska is likely putting it toward their summer farmer's market and implementing EBT.

***Policy Updates**

- Let's keep each other posted as new administration emerges and affects ag policy...
- Current Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack has resigned a week early with no replacement named
- April 29th People's Climate Change March in Washington

***Task Force Updates**

- The task forces have completed their work on the FFN Action Toolkit to be distributed at the Food Summit and are now preparing resource guides on their respective topics, to be hosted on the FFN website.
 - i. Local Food Sales - Tricia Phelps
 - ii. Farm to Institution - Kelly Lively
 - iii. Agribusiness Generation - Rod Robinson
 - iv. Farmland Resources - Brian Bourdages
 1. The *Farmland Investment Firm* is on track, will hopefully be giving presentations this summer.
 - v. Food Access - Meghan McDermott

***Farm Route to Prosperity Summit Updates**

- Happening February 17th, 2:30PM to 5PM at the Old Town Playhouse, with happy hour and networking to follow
- TC350 screening of 'Before the Flood' afterward at 6:30PM

***General Updates**

- Rearrangement of FFN business meetings and study sessions. All will start at 10:30AM.
 - *March 15th*= Tour and volunteering at Father Fred
 - *April 19th*= Business meeting
 - *May 17th*= Visit to MSU horticultural station and a protected farm

- Hoophouse Webinar Screenings at the Grand Traverse Food Innovation Hub, Jan 24th, 31st, Feb 7th at 7:30PM. More details on our facebook events page.
 - The webinars are part of the Hoophouses for Health program, a collaboration between the Michigan Farmers Market Association, MSU Center for Regional Food Systems and MSU Department of Horticulture.
- Groundwork and the Local Food Alliance of Northern Michigan have received 40 (!) applications for their Local Food Coordinator Position to be housed in Petoskey. They are excited to be collaborating and are looking forward to interviewing some stellar candidates.
- Need some more ag world representatives at the **Stronger Economies Together (SET)** proces. The next meeting will be held *Wednesday Jan. 25th at 1pm* at the Benzie County Government Center Board of Commissioners room.
- Baker College has been working with the Farm Bureau to put on some great programming. They are hosting a Manure Hauling conference today and another Agricultural conference come March. Stay tuned for details!