Ohio Cooperative Development Center

Insight into Current Cooperative Development

Jan / Feb 2014

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Ohio Cooperative Development Center Makes an Impact

Over the past 5 years, the Ohio Cooperative Development Center (OCDC) has successfully assisted clients and cooperatives to improve the economic condition of rural Ohio. Over this time, the clients that OCDC has assisted have formed 34 cooperatives and cooperative-like organizations in various industry sectors ranging from local foods, commercial exhaust cleaning, manufacturing, and healthcare. As a result, these organizations have created 106 new jobs, and retained 123 jobs.

In 2013, these cooperatives invested $636,000, generated nearly $1 million in new sales, created 27 new jobs and retained 58 jobs. In addition, new and emerging cooperatives have been awarded $9,000 in seed grants that assisted them in exploring the feasibility of their enterprises, develop marketing materials to increase revenues, and work with professional service providers to ensure their business is poised for successful start-up and/or growth.

If your existing or emerging cooperative is interested in meeting with Christie Welch, OCDC Program Manager, for a one-on-one or group meeting to discuss starting or expanding your cooperative reach, please email welch.183@osu.edu or call 740-289-2071 x234. You may also go to http://southcenters.osu.edu/cooperatives for more information regarding cooperative development.

"Individually, we are one drop. Together, we are an ocean."
~Ryunosuke Satoro

The Ohio Cooperative Development Center is supported by the United States Department of Agriculture and The Ohio State University South Centers.
Seed Grants for Cooperatives
Still Available for 2014

Reimbursement seed grants are available to groups interested in exploring or growing a cooperative.

The Ohio Cooperative Development Center (OCDC) at Ohio State University South Centers is offering reimbursement seed grants to groups interested in exploring or growing a cooperative. Cooperatives are legal businesses that form when members of the group can do something better together than they can individually. There are many different types of cooperatives in Ohio. They range from farmers’ markets and local food hubs, to health care providers, industrial cleaning enterprises, and manufacturers.

Groups interested in forming a cooperative may request up to $1,500 for research and early planning, feasibility study, and formation services. Examples include legal and/or professional fees, focus groups, development of articles of incorporation, financial projections, and other feasibility and/or formation work.

Incorporated cooperatives or member controlled businesses may request up to $3,000 for assistance with the expansion of the cooperative into new markets and/or enterprises. Examples of eligible expenses include marketing and promotions, contract services, training and development, accounting systems, bylaw completion, and contractual document development.

Recipients must provide 25% matching funds for project costs with their own resources. This is a reimbursement program and the project must be completed and proper documentation provided for reimbursement.

If your existing or emerging cooperative is interested in applying for this program, email Kimberly Roush at roush.143@osu.edu, call 740-289-2071 x232, or go to http://southcenters.osu.edu/cooperatives under the Seed Grants tab to download an application.

The Ohio Cooperative Development Center is supported by the United States Department of Agriculture and The Ohio State University South Centers.
The Farmers’ Market Management Network (FMMN) will host the 5th Annual Ohio Farmers’ Market Conference on March 13 and 14, 2014.

It will be held at the Dublin Community Recreation Center, 5600 Post Rd., Dublin, OH 43017.

The conference is open to market managers, market vendors, and other individuals interested in farmers’ markets.

Farmers’ markets are serving the consumer demand for fresh, local food received directly from the farmer. Markets are positioned to appeal to specialty artisan foods as well as health-conscious families and older adults.

The conference will address market management, marketing, food safety, and more.

View the event brochure details as well as register online at fmmn.org.

**Conference Agenda**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conference Registration Fees:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>FMMN Members:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Non-Members:</strong></td>
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<td>Thursday and Friday</td>
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To see FMMN membership benefits or to join FMMN, go to http://fmmn.org.

Meals will only be guaranteed if registered before March 5, 2014.

To Register:
1. Mail Registration Information To:
   Farmers’ Market Management Network
   Attn: Jaime Moore
   P.O. Box 527
   Worthington, OH 43085
2. Register Online at: fmmn.org.

Payments Options
Check: Payable to Farmers’ Market Management Network
Credit Card: Visa, MasterCard or American Express

### Thursday, March 13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:00</td>
<td>Registration and Breakfast</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:00</td>
<td>Welcome and Introductions</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:15</td>
<td>Keynote: Dr. Diane Warner, Market Umbrella</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:45</td>
<td>Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:00</td>
<td>Breakout Session I: Administration and Structure, Viability of Market, or Small Business Inception and Lending</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:00</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:00</td>
<td>Breakout Session II: Marketing 101, Fundraising and Sponsorship, or Data Collection and Use</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:00</td>
<td>Breakout Session III: EBT 101, Data Collection and Use, or Organic Certification at Farmers’ Markets</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:05</td>
<td>Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:20</td>
<td>Breakout Session IV: Guided EBT Application, Organic Certification at Farmers’ Markets, or Marketing Your Products</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:25</td>
<td>Group Roundtable Discussions</td>
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<tr>
<td>5:20</td>
<td>Conclude for the Day</td>
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</tbody>
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Dinner will be on your own. Please visit the registration table for suggested venues.

### Friday, March 14

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6:00</td>
<td>Registration, Breakfast and FMMN Annual Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:00</td>
<td>Food Safety</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:05</td>
<td>Disaster Preparedness</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:10</td>
<td>Breakout Session V: Tricks, Tools and Programs: Volunteer Recruitment and Retention, or Connecting with Customers</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:10</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00</td>
<td>Breakout Session VI: Events, EBT Incentives and Vegetable Preservation Programs, or PSM and Leafy Greens Rules</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:05</td>
<td>Conclude</td>
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OSU and WVU Extension Continue Cooperative Collaboration

OCDC continues to work with Ohio State University and West Virginia University Extension Educators to increase access to cooperative development technical assistance in communities throughout Ohio and West Virginia.

This cooperative development partnership actively facilitates critical community projects such as food hub development by assisting in the expansion of local efforts to create full-time, profitable, financially viable local food businesses. USDA defines a food hub as “a centrally located facility with a business management structure facilitating the aggregation, storage, processing, distribution, and/or marketing of locally and regionally produced food products.”

OCDC understands that farmers are critical in these efforts and give consideration to maintaining and even assisting to increase the number of farming professionals.

Spotlight => Specialty Crop Growers Apprenticeship Program

Expanding access to nutritious, homegrown Ohio food is important not only to the health of consumers, but also helps in decreasing unemployment and to improving our rural economy. In response to the escalating demand for locally grown specialty crops, the Non-Profit Local Foods Network (NPLFN), local producers and community growing projects, and OSU South Centers has partnered to address the need to increase the number of specialty crop growers in Ohio.

In 2011, the Non-Profit Local Food Network, under the direction of President Rick Dinovo of Central Marketing, formed an Education and New Growers Support Committee chaired by Steve Fortenberry of Goodness Grows. This committee, consisting of member representatives from Goodness Grows, OSU Extension, Central Marketing, Enright EcoVillage, Findlay Market, Ohio Cooperative Development Center, and the United Food and Commercial Workers meets regularly to discuss solutions to the need for more local specialty crop growers. The committee put together a program designed to educate and support new specialty crop growers as they enter the farming industry. As part of that plan, a Specialty Crop Growers Apprenticeship Program was submitted and approved by the Ohio State Apprenticeship Council for implementation. The first apprenticeship classes began in April 2012 in the Cincinnati and North Canton/Youngstown areas.

Potential apprentices submitted applications, interviewed, and took a general skills knowledge assessment. Approved applicants began classes on April 4. The Specialty Crop Growers Apprenticeship Training Program consists of 144 technical classroom instruction hours and 2,000 hours of “Hands-on Experience”/on-the-job-training (OJT). Apprentices will work a paid hourly rate for 30 to 40 hours per week until 2,000 OJT hours are completed. Classroom training will occur 4 hours a week for 9 months. The effort is coordinated locally by Charles Griffin with Enright EcoVillage, Findlay Market, Our Harvest Cooperative, along with Christie Welch, OCDC Program Manager and Farmers’ Market Specialist at OSU South Centers, Greg Bowman with Goodness Grows, and Chet Bowling, OSU Extension Community Development Specialist.

Training will include online technical instruction provided by Brad Bergefurd, Horticulture Specialist at OSU South Centers, in research-proven techniques of planning seasonal crop production, maintaining equipment and facilities, preparing growing medium for planting, harvesting and packing produce for delivery, government regulations compliance, and product marketing strategies. Also included in the online technical training are business and cooperative development related topics provided by the Ohio Cooperative Development Center Staff and other guest speakers regarding topics such as: safety requirements, recordkeeping, taxes, financing and loan options, land acquisition, business planning, cooperative formation, bylaws development, board of directors training, and cooperative purchasing.

Upon program completion, each apprentice will receive a certificate of completion from the Ohio Apprenticeship Council and the Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training, U.S. Department of Labor. Participants who complete the apprenticeship program will continue to be supported by the NPLFN through technical support specialists in the specialty crop growers’ field.
Quick Facts about US Co-Ops

A cooperative is a member-owned and controlled business that operates for the mutual benefit of its members. Cooperatives operate across all sectors of the US economy and include agriculture, food distribution and retailing, childcare, credit unions, purchasing, worker-owned, housing, healthcare, energy and telecommunications cooperatives.

Approximately 233 million people are served by insurance companies owned by or closely affiliated with co-ops.

More than 29,000 cooperatives operate in every sector of the economy and in every congressional district; Americans hold over 350 million co-op memberships.

About 1.2 million rural Americans in 31 states are served by the 260 telephone cooperatives.

More than 50,000 families in the US use cooperative day care centers, giving co-ops a crucial role in the care of our children.

The majority of our country’s 2 million farmers are members of the nearly 3,000 farmer-owned cooperatives. They provide over 250 thousand jobs and annual wages of over $8 billion.

More than 7,500 credit unions provide financial services to 91 million US consumers.


http://southcenters.osu.edu/cooperatives
According to USDA, food hubs are businesses or organizations that manage the aggregation, distribution and marketing of source-identified food products. The recent survey results from more than 100 food hubs demonstrate that hubs throughout the United States continue to develop as financially viable businesses providing locally produced food to restaurants, schools, grocery stores and other wholesale customers. Food hubs may also provide much needed size-appropriate infrastructure and marketing opportunities for local food produced by small and midsized farms and ranches.

In 2013, the Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems and the Wallace Center at Winrock International conducted the 2013 National Food Hub Survey.

Key findings from the survey indicate that food hubs are:

- Financially viable. Sixty-six percent of food hubs operate independently from outside funding sources.
- Contributing significantly to the growth of their local economies. The average food hub’s sales in 2012 exceeded $3.7 million.
- Creating jobs. The average food hub houses 19 paid positions.
- Supporting regional producers. The average food hub worked with 80 producers (i.e., farms and ranches), the majority of which are small or midsized.
- Contributing to food access. Nearly half of all food hubs have operational commitments to equity, increasing food access and/or community development.

A full report of the survey findings can be found at http://foodsystems.msu.edu/resources/2013-food-hub-survey, and on the Wallace Center’s site, www.ngfn.org/2013foodhubsurvey. If you would like information about the food hub projects in Ohio and/or West Virginia, contact OCDC. (source: http://foodsystems.msu.edu/news/stories/read/2013-food-hub-survey)