

**2012
IN
REVIEW**

Direct Marketing Food & Agriculture

The Ohio Direct Marketing Team

Providing marketing solutions for today's agriculture producers & food entrepreneurs

AmeriCorp VISTA volunteer added to improve food access by connecting producers & buyers

In 2012, an average of 5,900+ unique visitors logged into Ohio MarketMaker each month. See next page for additional program updates.

Much of the growth in Ohio MarketMaker's program in 2012 can be attributed to the addition of Stacy Haight, our second AmeriCorp VISTA Volunteer supporting our local foods projects.

In addition to increasing profile registrations, Stacy has been instrumental in helping producers and buyers utilize the full potential of this powerful program.

For more information on the AmeriCorp VISTA program, visit www.americorps.gov

Each year, direct marketing educational sessions and materials reach more than 5,000 professionals including small and medium scale producers, food processors, farmers' market managers, grocery store managers, chefs, winery operators, beekeepers, aquaculture farmers, Christmas tree growers, garden center owners, community leaders, tourism professionals, economic developers, entrepreneurs, scholars, international visitors and OSU students.

The Ohio Direct Marketing Team monitors trends, conducts research and develops educational programs and resources to prepare producers to take advantage of emerging market opportunities. By collaborating with representatives from other universities, government agencies, nonprofit groups and industry associations, the team is able to bring the best resources to Ohio entrepreneurs.

Some of the highlights from 2012 include:

- * 289 food producers and professionals participated in MarketReady education, preparing them to enter new markets
- * 194 entrepreneurs participated in social media marketing webinars and seminars
- * 50 nursery, garden center and landscape professionals participated in a hands-on marketing workshop* 35 entrepreneurs from 5 states joined in an on-farm field day and workshop on Agritourism Emergency Preparedness
- * 70 beekeeping professionals joined in a marketing webinar
- * 210 people learned about Farm to School

The team also secured funding to develop the Maps and Apps program to help producers improve market access through mobile media marketing. By assisting in business and economic development, the team helps improve producers' marketing knowledge, practices and performance.

MarketReady Program Expanded in 2012

Through five full-day workshops and six conference presentations, 289 Ohio food producers learned what it takes to sell to grocers, restaurants, schools, and through other direct marketing channels.

This program not only educates attendees on best marketing practices, but it takes it a step further by facilitating a panel of buyers who share their insight when sourcing local products. Participants leave with the knowledge and resources to develop the marketing strategies that work best for their business.

The first specialized MarketReady program was launched in 2012 targeting the unique needs of selling Ohio wines. Working in partnership with the Ohio Grape Industries

Committee, MarketReady developer, Tim Woods, from the University of Kentucky, worked with the Ohio wine industry leaders to develop this custom program targeted to expand Ohio wine selections in stores and restaurants.

Over 50 wineries took advantage of this training. Due to its success, additional specialized MarketReady programs are being developed, with an Aquaculture MarketReady program being developed in 2013.

MARKETREADY



<http://go.osu.edu/MarketReady>



www.ohiomarketmaker.com





Ohio Direct Marketing Team members meet to develop curriculum and other resources.

Funded Projects

Through collaboration, the team seures financial resources to benefit Ohio producers. In 2012,

- MarketReady, funded in part by NCSARE PDP.
- Maps & Apps funded by NCRMEC
- Ohio MarketMaker, funded by state partners
- Agritourism Emergency Management funded by USDA-NIFA
- Farm to School, funded in part by the USDA/ODA Specialty Crop blocok grant

National Conference Presentations

Requests for team members to present our programs on a national level continue to increase. 2012 presentations include:

- National Women in Ag Educators Conference
- Community Development Society 2012 Conference
- National Extension Assn. of Family & Consumer Sciences Annual Conference
- National Farm to Cafeteria Conference
- National Assn. of Community Development Extension Professionals
- Great Lakes Expo

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Ohio MarketMaker, making connections that work

With more than 5,900 visitors per month and close to 500 farmer profiles, 194 farmers' markets, 65 agritourism enterprises, 89 wineries, 16 fisheries, 1,500 wholesalers, 12,000 food retailers and more than 27,000 eating and drinking listings, the Ohio MarketMaker program plays an important role in connecting Ohio's food producers and local buyers. New feature in 2012:

- **Business Connections**
Businesses can show links to other businesses on their profile. This is a great tool for schools, restaurants, groceries and farmers' markets wanting to showcase their relationships with local food producers.
- **Business Opportunity Notifications**
Buyers can sign up to be notified when specific products are available or a new ad is posted to the Buy and Sell Forum or new businesses register that match their product preferences and locations of interest.
- **Unique User Name and Password**
Usernames and Passwords can now be chosen by registrants, rather than automatically assigned.
- **Demographic and Food Consumption Data**
Market data continues to be updated and available free of charge to those exploring and developing new markets.
- **Farm to Food Bank Donation Hotline will send** important updates regarding food donation opportunities in Ohio. This feature is currently being tested in select partner states.

This web-based industry resource would not be possible without the support of the growing national MarketMaker network and our Ohio partners: the Ohio Department of Agriculture/Ohio Proud, Ohio Farm Bureau/Our Ohio, Ohio Grape Industries Committee, the Center for Innovative Food Technology (CIFT), Ohio Produce Growers and Marketers Association (OPGMA).

Momentum in 2013

An aggressive marketing education schedule is already developed for 2013, complete with enhanced curriculum and new programs including:

- **MarketReady** – More full-day workshops, online modules and specialized curriculum like a verison linked to the new Acquaculture Boot Camp program being launched at the OSU South Centers (USDA Beginning Farmers & Ranchers funding).
- **Ohio Food Forum – Bringing Producers and Buyers to the Table** – As a result of the success of the marketing panels during the MarketReady workshops and a 2010 Local Food Summit, a formal event is being planned where invited producers will meet with buyers interested in their products to develop sales opportunities
- **Maps & Apps** – Webianrs, semianrs and a full-day workshops to prepare producers to improve market access through Internet maps, GPS Points of Interst, mobile apps, mobile web presence and other mobile media marketing opportunitites. Producers will evaluate their current presence on smartphones, tablets and other mobile devices and then learn how to correct and enhance information that makes it easy for customers to find and interact with them.
- **More MarketMaker Enhancements** – With a goal of making this Ohio's go-to source to find local foods, look for upgrades to make this site even more user-friendly and customizable.

Ohio Marketing Connections Partnership

The Ohio Direct Marketing Team and Marketing Connections program is coordinated by Julie Fox, Direct Marketing Program Director at the Ohio State University South Centers, a research and Extension unit of the OSU College of Food, Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. <http://directmarketing.osu.edu>