

NW WISCONSIN REGIONAL FOOD NETWORK

<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/cty/barron/cnred/foodnetwork.html>

AN OCCASIONAL NEWSLETTER

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AGENDA FOR DECEMBER 13TH, 2006 MTG

Wed., December 13th, 6:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Barron County Courthouse

330 E. LaSalle Rm 110

Barron, WI

Driving directions:

<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/cty/barron/map.html>

Meeting to include another home-made dinner by ON FIRE OVENS! at the BARRON COUNTY COURTHOUSE. Suggested donation \$10 for dinner; attendees also expected to assist with clean up. **Please RSVP to 715.537.6250 or email andrew.dane@ces.uwex.edu so Jenny knows how much food to prepare for dinner...**

Dinner

Introductions

Finalize agenda

Reports from communication and marketing sub-groups

Cluster break outs – goal setting, action planning

Cooperative formation discussion with representatives from CDS (cooperative development services) and guest from marketing cooperative (invited)

MINUTES FROM NOVEMBER MEETING

Will be shared at later date, and posted to webpage

First half of meeting spent discussing issues surrounding formation of cooperative

Second half of meeting spent in cluster groups

BUY LOCAL, BUY WISCONSIN PROPOSAL

We have been asked by the Michael Fields Institute to draft a letter in support of the proposed Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin program. A summary of the program is provided below. To read the complete document, visit our web page where you will find a link to a pdf file of the entire proposal. If you are willing to draft a letter or contribute to drafting a letter please email some ideas to andrew.dane@ces.uwex.edu or share your ideas at our December meeting.

Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin Program Summary

Farmers, industry groups and others interested in “Buy Local” opportunities have partnered with DATCP to support and connect the resources, strategies and state policies that will increase local sales of Wisconsin food products. A working group was convened to identify coordination, policy and advocacy for producers, institutions and communities who want to increase local selling and buying opportunities for products grown and produced in Wisconsin.

The outcome of the working group is a Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin program proposal (BLBW). The Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin program integrates two components:

I. *Food & Culture Tourism Trails *

This component will create trails throughout Wisconsin to promote a region’s unique food, culture and products. The trails will bridge food and culture to craft a new tourism experience for travelers--a personal invitation and guide to meet producers and experience communities who grow and highlight local food products. The traveler will be able to experience it, taste it, and purchase it. This connection will not only generate immediate tourism dollars within a community but will also impact purchasing decisions by establishing a relationship between the consumer and the producer, ultimately steering future food expenditures toward locally grown and produced foods.

II. *Regional Food System Development *

This component will identify and address the variety of hurdles facing regional food system development, such as supply and distribution problems, access to markets, lack of state policy, geographic distance from major markets, institutional purchasing impediments, value-adding capacity, or limited business skills. This will be accomplished through the creation of online tools and networks, a competitive grant program and program coordination that will support and inspire agricultural innovation. These tools will help food producers meet the challenges they face, including access to markets, geographic distance from major markets, institutional purchasing impediments, value-adding capacity, or limited business skills.

1ST WISCONSIN LOCAL FOOD SUMMIT

Please consider joining us for the upcoming Local Food Summit which will be held in Stevens Point on January 4th and 5th (optional 2nd day). There are a few of you who have already expressed interest. There is even some funding available to cover registration costs. We are also looking into helping cover some travel costs. Even if you can't make it we could use your help getting the word out. A sample news release as well as a registration brochure is available on our webpage. A web page listing some of the interesting projects around the state, as well as links to registration is available at: <http://aic.uwex.edu/localfood.cfm>

YOUR INPUT NEEDED FOR MOSES-LED ORGANIC WORKSHOPS

We have been asked to share our thoughts on topics and possible dates for organic workshop in our area. Organic production and certification workshops geared towards farmers will be given over the next year throughout the state. MOSES will provide resource materials for the attendees. Each presentation can be customized to cover specific production areas, such as dairy, crops and forages, beef, poultry or vegetables/flowers. A mixture of a few of these topics can also be covered, but it is difficult to discuss /all /of these areas in detail in one 2-3 hour workshop.

NEWS TO SHARE

Next year, environmental concerns will exert a bigger force in food processing and packaging as players in the supply chain strive to become more energy-efficient and eco-friendly. The new products that reflect this trend are not necessarily organic and are described by several terms such as sustainable, all-natural, fair trade, clean and antibiotic-, hormone- and pesticide-free, reported *Restaurant Business*.

Full story:

http://www.restaurantbiz.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=13407

UPCOMING EVENTS

The Wisconsin School for Beginning Market Growers

Emphasizing Organic Production Methods and Direct Marketing

January 19-21, 2007

UW-Madison

<http://www.cias.wisc.edu/marketgrower.php>

2007 Midwest Value-Added Conference

January 26, 27, Red Wing, MN

<http://www.rivercountryrfd.org/valad.htm>

NORTHWEST WISCONSIN REGIONAL FOOD NETWORK

A grassroots group of local farmers, volunteers and agency staff working together to create a regional food system that connects consumers back to the land and provides locally produced, fresh and nutritious foods to all segments of our community while preserving the region's environment and sustaining the local economy for years to come