

Introduction

Primary Goals for this Meeting

- Identify what's working and what are the current challenges
- Focus on marketing issues for 2016 while developing long-range plan
- Question 1 – what opportunities for coordinated marketing should be pursued?
- Question 2 – is there interest in forming a farmer-to-farmer group on the island for purposes of planning and addressing common issues

Farm Tour History

- Original goals of the Farm Tour were to build positive rapport between farms and community, promote locally grown products, and to assist farms with marketing efforts and overall sustainability
- WICD goals include sustainability of working farm and forest lands
- FT has been turning into more of a tourism event than a farm to community event
 - Agri-tourism is valuable but does not fit well within WICD mission
- The number of visitors attending the tour has been declining the last few years
- The number of farms willing to participate in the tour has been declining the last few years
- The Farm Tour Committee has concluded that it is time to move forward into a new era
- Taking a one-year hiatus frees up time for all to determine where to go from here to best support local agriculture

The following summarizes the discussions of the meeting, organized by five primary topics that emerged:

- Marketing
- Events
- Processing & Distribution
- Regulatory Issues
- Whidbey Agriculture Organization(s)

Marketing

What's Working

Whidbey Farmers Survey Results: Venues for sales – an estimated 80% of sales appears to be direct from the farmer.

- Whidbey Farm Map & Guide has been effective; people carry these with them
- Significant value of direct face-to-face connections with the farmer – farmers' markets, CSAs, on-farm events

- Kylie put together a really nice newsletter for the North Whidbey CSA (a collaboration of several farms) – a number of members visited their farm specifically on the Farm Tour because of their membership.
- An important component of marketing on Whidbey is local networking, such as through the Slow Food group, Grange Food News, and other groups and individuals
- Farm store approach is working – on-farm stores, farm products stores
- Farm stands open for people to come in as they need is very beneficial
- Diversifying
 - Adding new share size to address needs of seniors (a smaller share size with fewer items)
 - As opposed to expanding, Bell's Farm varies products by growing 3 new things every year.

Challenges

- Several concerns about loss of Farm Tour, Whidbey Farm Map Guide, and Cascade Harvest this year.
 - NABC has been finding it getting harder to get farmers to participate in the Whidbey Farm Map & Guide and has been financially subsidizing the project for several years.
 - NABC's funds are startup funds – these funds are used to launch but not support programs over the long-term.
 - Status of Cascade Harvest – Sheryl Weizer of Puget Sound Fresh is in discussion about filling the gap of Cascade Harvest's closing.
- For some, the Whidbey market may be saturated
- Expansion – how many farms want to expand production?
- One goal of marketing is to continue to educate the consumer about where their food comes from
- Time to market is very limited
- Marketing budget is slim
- The farm collaborative North Whidbey CSA has been a little more difficult to make direct connection between members and farmers, such as by hosting members at farm events. Thinking about how to strengthen process next year. Want to increase members awareness of who the farmers are, where they are located, invite to visit.
- There are new kinds of customers these days for whom we may need to market differently. How can we get help increasing visibility? Farmers' Markets, building email lists help, but are slow to build a customer list while trying to sustain yourself.
- Brochures need updating on a regular basis.
- Oak Harbor's mobile community needs frequent education and outreach information about local food, both value of and where to get it; also true for larger Whidbey community
- Hard for folks to find local Whidbey food and farms via internet;
- Marketing intersects with distribution. Some organizations are organized more for consumers.
- Where do you want to find your next customers? Difficulties finding clarity.

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Ideas

- Want to continue a Whidbey Farm brochure this year
 - Explore opportunities to combine multiple printed marketing tools – farm map guide, roadside farm stands, farmers’ markets, CSAs, ...
 - Concern that people are less likely to carry larger publications with them. To keep smaller, could do seasonal.
 - Encourage more farms to participate
 - Form a committee to explore options, opportunities
- Can WICD help open doors to local facilities – hospital, schools?
 - Requires gap certification
 - Institution prices are extremely low. Some of the local hospitals are able to pay better than schools.
 - Can WICD help to educate institutes about the value of local foods
 - WICD has been getting articles in Whidbey Marketplace on a regular basis; goal is to keep local food/products in front of public.
- Marketing tool: Welcome bags in Oak Harbor area provided by realtors
 - Put brochures in welcome bags
- WICD can help with online presence
 - Could convert existing Farm Tour website to a more general marketing tool
 - Need to receive info from farms
 - Workshop on getting information from farms?
- Increase use of other social media, perhaps as a collaborative effort
- Puget Sound Fresh – we could get a section for Whidbey in their publications, including online. Need a critical mass of farms from Whidbey to draw sufficient viewership.
- Develop larger online presence collectively
 - Limited population on Whidbey, yet high population just across the water in north Seattle and south Everett metropolitan areas
- Market a collective of Whidbey Island products off-island in one location, such as at a market in north Seattle area
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Next Steps

- Annual Farm Map & Guide brochure:
 - Dorothy Mueller and Peg Tennant feel this brochure has been a great marketing tool. They propose to create a brochure for this year that will include:
 - Island map
 - Listing of Chambers/Visitor Centers (with Chamber buy in)
 - Listing of WSFMA markets (with buy in)
 - Listing of Farm Stands (with buy in)
 - Goosefoot’s WI Roadside Farm Stand brochure, increase in number of farm stands

- As these two brochures would have overlap, discuss working cooperatively.
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Events

What's Working

- The Farm Tour has been providing significant benefits, including direct connections, increased sales, and new, long-term customers.
- The Farm Tour brings out a number of locals who didn't know what was going on from the other side of the hedgerow. These connections often build positive relationships. There is a lot of work for Farm Tour, but must be some way to use a coordinated effort to get people out to the farms.
- Large events provide valuable networking opportunities
- Cross marketing - North Whidbey CSA newsletter brought a number of members out to visit the CSA farms specifically because of their membership.
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Challenges

- Not having the Farm Tour event reduces the opportunities for connections and increasing the customer base.
- Too many events at once draws down from markets
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Ideas

- Farm Tour / Farm Festival – could bring all farms together at one venue
 - Show your food, what else you do.
 - Seattle did a food trucks festival – had great business
- Can we increase coordination of events? (This has long been a challenge for all on Whidbey – all tourist season weekends have multiple events scheduled.)
- Multiple smaller events could better focus on peak of season for different crops/products
- Experiences are another way to get money out of visitors. They are looking for interesting things going on.
 - Bus tours coordinated through farms
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Next Steps

- Hold session to specifically discuss events

Processing & Distribution

Farmers Survey Results

- Results indicate that most farms are marketing within 0 – 25 miles, some farther to 50 miles

What's Working

- Farm store approach is working – on-farm stores, farm products stores
- Farm stands open for people to come in as they need is very beneficial
- Market right off farm allows farm to maintain quality control
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Challenges

- Self-serve farm store doesn't always work; lack of security means some loss of product/lack of payment when not staffed. May need to rethink customer/visitor management
- Transportation costs delivering product elsewhere
- Food hubs – mixed interest
 - Some have been approached by a number of parties wanting the farm to sign up for their program. Questions/concerns: where are you taking it? How well are you going to handle it? How are you going to market?
 - Have to subscribe for the whole year when the farm's primary crop may only run for 6 weeks
- Value added facilities
 - Who is processing what?
 - How many folks use the space in what time frame?
 - Lack of local facilities to process in the desired manner
 - Have to go to Oregon to have just your product in the jar (not co-packed with other growers)
- Cold storage vs processing – different games; storage is easier
- Processing/distribution facilities – Several farms expressed some interest
 - Is there sufficient volume of products from on-island farms to support a facility here or do we need to go off-island?
 - Large facility – have to have all growing and handling processes tested; more difficult when just getting started; find out what might be feasible for us to do here? At what volume are the margins large enough to make financially viable?
- Gap certification for a group of farms – random testing for a cooperative.
- Selling off-island to larger institutions – Microsoft, Amazon, etc. Food hub is working with these because the large businesses need volume of product
- FEMA Emergency kitchens – what is the funding source?
 - An Emergency Response Kitchen aka Emergency Preparedness Kitchen is designed specifically to be used in the event of an emergency. *(Note: I made a quick search on the internet and did not find any information about such kitchens except for a company that manufactures food trucks. Can anyone expand on this topic? Sarah Cassatt)*

- Insufficient harvesting capacity at peak season for short season crops
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Ideas

- Many questions on this topic – could hold a focused workshop to look into this
- Food hubs – could create one here (Goosefoot has some interest) to streamline distribution off island
 - Could be very valuable for those who have short term high capacity crops (shipability)
 - Is there enough volume on the island to support one
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Next Steps

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Regulatory Issues

What's Working

- Regulatory issues, policy issues are better because of view of folks toward farms and participation of farmers
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Challenges

- Food safety laws
- Gap certification: each farm has to be able to do stand-alone inspection. Maybe viable if there is a commitment from institution to purchase products on a steady basis.
- Political will re: cottage industry permitting – very difficult here (locally? Washington State?
 - Organizations are invaluable for these issues
- Can WICD monitor and disseminate information from Comprehensive Plan that will affect farmers?
 - We are sending out announcements by email, but the turn-around time to respond to the County is typically very short
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Ideas

- Form a focus group to work on comp plan
- Invite legislators to your farm
- Experts on regulations – bring in experts to help evaluate needs
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Next Steps

- WICD will let folks know when we see something in the Comprehensive Plan process related to agriculture, will send out periodic notices with dates when available

- Go to Island County 2036 website to find comp plan info: <http://islandcounty2036.org/>
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Whidbey Agriculture Organization(s)

What's Working

- King CD is now able to focus a great deal of time on local food per request of landowners paying assessment.
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Challenges

- We do not have a central organization that focuses on farmers
- Whidbey Island Grown – NABC supported this program with grant funding, which has now ended. Would need energy to coordinate the tasks.
 - Is there enough interest to support this program within the Island community?
 - Benefits not realized by all who have participated – may need further education about the program.
 - Coordinator needed who can do the marketing.
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Ideas

- WICD could go through a process similar to King CD to have sufficient funding to support local food.
- Consider forming a Whidbey agriculture organization or expand/build on Whidbey Island Grown

Next Steps

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Farmer's Marketing Planning Meeting – January 7, 2016

Collaborative Marketing Efforts – Existing Efforts

- Whidbey Island Farm Map & Guide –
 - NABC produced for 7 years; tourism tax funded grant to help publish this, match staff time, cost to farmers. David brought financial report for the map. David is taking feedback from farmers about what they need.
 - Started by Joanie Crowther and Sarah Richards in 2003. Sarah feels it has expanded, developed well since then.
 - Karen Bishop – in the last couple of years, there has been less response from farmers to being involved in the map, although some farmers are consistently responsive.
- Whidbey Island Grown Program –
 - David Bauermeister at NABC valued discussion at November meeting about pulling all these resources together – one single branding effort and combining resources/efforts could significantly increase efficiency. NABC spent about \$63,000 on WIG program to date (since 2007 or 2008).
- Whidbey Farm Stands Brochure –
 - Goosefoot plans to continue to producing this brochure
- Whatever is next – a primary goal is to make sure that whatever marketing strategy is selected is something that farmers are consistently engaged in.

Discussion by Topic

Two goals of tonight's discussion are:

- (1) Identify strategies you want to consider for marketing your farm
- (2) Determine if you want to implement these strategies by working together or individually

General Marketing Points

- Sarah R - make sure that all different types of farming activities represented on the island are represented in the marketing approach we use – larger-scale farming, small farms, value-added agriculture, agritourism.
- Chris – consider the “entertainment value” for visitors of ag activities, including farmers' markets
- Jerry S – understanding who are the customers can be a challenge – such as range of customers – folks who plan a visit vs. those who stop in because they happen to be driving by

- How easy or difficult is it for folks new to the island to find sources of ag products online - farmers markets, farms, CSAs, farm stores, roadside stands
- Marketing costs
 - Marketing collaboratively can reduce costs to individuals
 - Soliciting financial support from funding organizations can be difficult due to timing: funding organizations have to set budgets early in the year, often before costs of this year's marketing efforts are determined.
 - The fewer advertising venues overall, the lower the cost.
- To be effective marketing collaboratively – need to have greater number of Island farmers involved. Increases efficiencies of both effort and cost.
 - Part of the problem is not having a complete contact/email list.
 - How many farmers are on the island? Mary Engle – there are more farmers than we realize – 597 owners in Current Use Ag program.
 - Part is the number of people who are actively engaged – we have been getting about a 50% open rate on emails. How to make sure all who might be interested are engaged. John B – may be worth making contact by phone, especially new folks.
- Sarah R sees that having a highly talented paid person focused on marketing is very much worthwhile (i.e. Sherrye Wyatt who worked on developing the WIG brand).

Cascade Harvest Annual Publication – Puget Sound Fresh

- Prescott – It covers much of Puget Sound. They also have online and weekly email covering upcoming events. Last year only 4 WI farms and 2 markets in it.
- Karen B – Cascade Harvest merged with Seattle Tilth. There was a question about Farm Guide funding. With the merger, Puget Sound Fresh has landed under their umbrella. Any guide we create could be linked to a wider audience through this venue.
 - Question – are farms interested individually? Or are you interested in marketing collaboratively through this venue?
- Anza – what is the pricing and audience for Cascade Harvest guide?
 - WI farms could combine for a whole page with a map
 - \$2300 for a page – would it be worth it?
- John B wants to better understand its value. Sarah R has paid for a listing for several years – so far, she hasn't found it to be worth the money.
- Is this a problem of lack of number of farm listings from Whidbey/Island County?

Whidbey Island Farm Map

- Participation has been falling off in the past 2 years.
 - David – fewer farmers makes it more costly – with fewer farms, need more advertisers.
 - They have produced the map from 2009 through 2015 at an avg cost of \$7,115 per year.

- Peg and Dorothy have found this map to be very effective – they see many visitors to Oak Harbor Market and elsewhere carrying the brochure with them. They are committed to producing the brochure for this year and are contacting farmers re: participation. Currently do not expect to be able to raise enough funds to put on the ferries this year.
 - Prescott - Support for getting this done right away so can get brochure out to farms early in season.
 - Sarah R found the WI Country Farms map to be very effective with her visitors. Benefits: attractive brochure, on the ferry.
 - The current map doesn't have a web presence, but we can add that.
 - It has been published on the NABC website, but this may not be a location that is easy for visitors to find
 - Bev Heising sent in a comment that she wants to support the continuation of the map and its' distribution on the ferries and at visitor centers, etc.
- Chambers stock these have them. Some farms didn't get any this past year – didn't know they could pick them up from the chambers.
- Cost is an issue. Facebook is free, so some rely on that for their marketing. Do pick up folks from out of the area. Friends are a great marketing tool.
- Peg – they have a list of 45 farms from OH to Greenbank. Still building the list, especially for the south end, then will send a letter out. Would like to have the brochure printed by April 10.
 - They plan to do an 8.5 by 11" or 14", glossy paper (holds up better in the rain, etc.) \$50 per farm based on 14 farms. 4 markets at \$100 each. Chambers?
 - Don't like the larger, more folded brochures because people are less likely to use them. Mary doesn't pick up the Cascade Harvest Guide, but always picks up the trifold guides.
- Funding
 - Could be paid for by local advertisers that have a connection to ag. Who is your audience?
 - Without advertising, have more space for farm listings.
 - Recommendation: if get many more farms, don't lower the price, but use additional funds to distribute on the ferry. Could we partner with the Chambers to get on the ferry? Town of Coupeville has a slot in the ferry rack too.
 - David B – if sufficient interest from farms, he thinks he can pull together funds to cover the cost for ferry distribution. If we can come up with another proposal, NABC would consider assisting.
 - 2% funds to Chambers – could some of that be available for this year? Peg & Dot will talk to them.
- Very important to get something out in time for this season. Can build and add improvements next year.
- Graphic artist is assisting them.

- Dorothy – they will set up a new email separate from markets etc. for communications

Farm Tour

- Timing of Farm Tour - Wilbur Purdue – later in the fall was a sweet spot in the timing for their farm, earlier in the fall is lower production time. Consider what time works best for each farm – could create a map with information about what to see when.
 - Can tailor your marketing to what you need.
- WI Farm Tour map is confusing for visitors because farms not open all year, whereas the WI Farm Map & Guide is very similar but for farms open all or most of the year.

Whidbey Island Grown Brand and Possible Transition to Umbrella Organization

- NABC has been maintaining Whidbey Island Grown website and Facebook presence. Needs updating with newer information
 - WIG website – if Whidbey farmers want to take it over they can. It has its own web address.
 - Websites need constant updating – need dedicated staff.
 - Claire Accord’s blog + Chris’ newsletter – takes 2 people volunteering significant time.
 - WIG – membership program, not everyone meets the standards - Is there a way to adjust this? Make umbrella organization and then have subsets for specific programs.
- WIG is a program – with various aspects. Can it be redefined to be a larger umbrella organization? Yes. NABC – when is their effort done?
 - Loren Imes sent in a comment that he’d really like to see the WIG brand supported.
- Can we create an umbrella website? Issues: funding, sustainability, staffing, accessibility.
- David – This community is quite small to support someone to collect the information, and implement. San Juan Islands guild – non-profit – developing a year-round market using a building in Friday Harbor. The San Juan Island group has a website with access by each farm to their own section. Same struggles –similar size of community as WI. Soliciting sponsorship by businesses to help support the program. Could create an informal association here. SJI added staff – blended funding from a variety of sources, including markets, sponsorships, etc.
- Could Goosefoot function as a non-profit, overarching entity? David – you want an organization that is farmer-driven.
- Dorcus – very important to get a more complete list of farms on the island to help create a non-profit organization.
 - Mary – Department of Revenue keeps a personal property business listing by topic (ag)
- Sarah R – very interested in idea of an umbrella Whidbey Island agriculture organization
- Advocacy needs, Farm Bureau has a different focus (Country Mutual Insurance) more about politics, state level, some local

- Feel the need to get a focus group together to begin to develop this idea. General agreement to move forward with this.
 - FMPP – this is what the other local groups have used. Has not yet been announced.
 - Carefully select a group of people to represent the cross-section of Whidbey ag – types, sizes of farms.

Next Steps

- Sarah R feels we need to focus on what we can do this year, not get too spread out
- Focus next few weeks on the umbrella organization
- Is everyone comfortable with the publication Peg & Dorothy are working on?
 - If they can be provided additional support, would they be willing to expand the publication and marketing for this year? (They had to leave meeting earlier)
 - Someone willing to go get sponsors?
 - How can we best support their project?
 - By next meeting, they will know if they have sufficient farmers
 - Sarah R has offered to meet with them to discuss what else the group would like to see.
 - People will give you money if you show them what you are trying to achieve.
 - Website – islandgrown.net as an example. Can use 2 web addresses to get to one website, so could combine WIG and Farm Tour websites.

NEXT MEETING:

Thursday, February 11

5:30 – 8:00 pm

Potluck

Nordic Hall, 63 Jacobs Road, Coupeville

Whidbey Farmers Planning Meeting – Feb 11, 2016

Meeting Notes

16 attendees

Note: Items for which we have made specific requests for feedback are in **red font**. Of course any and all thoughts and comments are welcome. Please send feedback to: sarah@whidbeycd.org and I will collect all together.

I. Mission & Vision of this Endeavor

A smaller group including Karen Bishop, Sarah Cassatt, Sarah Richards, Kelsi Franzen, John Burks, Wilbur Bishop met to begin to discuss the details of what we want the farmer “umbrella organization” to look like. To that end, the small work group began to develop a vision and mission statement.

Vision Statement

Here’s a definition of a vision statement:

- Defines the optimal desired future state - the mental picture - of what an organization wants to achieve over time.

Draft vision statements:

- Farming on Whidbey continues to be a viable occupation.
- Whidbey farmers are able to create and sustain thriving agricultural enterprises

Let us know if you like either of these statements or send us another that better represents the vision of this organization.

Mission Statement

A mission statement defines the present state or purpose of an organization and answers three questions about why an organization exists:

- WHAT it does;
- WHO it does it for; and
- HOW it does what it does.

Draft mission statements:

- Create an organization of Whidbey farmers with a unified voice.
- Our mission is to provide resources farmers need to be successful.
- Our mission is to provide an umbrella organization for Whidbey farmers.

Please provide feedback or suggestions for the mission statement.

Topics of Interest

A variety of topics were brought up as possible areas of interest for the group:

- issues of production,

- cooperatively purchasing materials,
- marketing (on-island, off-island)
 - cooperatively marketing to grocery stores
- policy and advocacy,
- education,
- labor,
- events,
- taxes/accounting
- resources, links
- affiliated organizations (WSU, WICD, NABC, Farm Bureau, FFA)

Organizational Structure

How it should be structured – maybe don't need to be concerned about this in the near term.

- WICD may be able to assist with coordination and communications
- Over time, as the group makes decisions on activities to take on, a desired structure will likely become clear. The general feeling was that the group should get started and then worry about long term structure.

Whidbey Dairy Federation, as an example, included both educational and social components. It provided a venue for farmers to talk about farming with each other. The group was active and sustained over a long period of time. They met monthly, discussed relevant issues, hosted presentations and workshops, and often socialized well into the evening.

The group feels that meeting on a regular date monthly with a strong educational topic and good speakers will be key to getting farmers to participate and find value in this “umbrella” organization.

General Group Discussion

- Anza Muenchow – held her first meeting with the advisory group for the new IC WSU Small Farms Program – Liz Sherman noted similar farmer group activities in the past.
- Lydia Christiansen – AG-based business - fiber, wants to buy her wool locally, talking with other similar groups in the area, consensus that small businesses need support. Umbrella group – our farms and markets are very diverse, our target audiences we are marketing to are scattered – how will this organization meet needs for all. Target markets can be very specific. Regarding events, visitors may enjoy the education, but also don't necessarily buy anything. She feels she has to take on her entire supply chain herself to meet her needs. Are there opportunities to connect in cross-over points to share burden where we can?
- We feel that we need to focus on production, yet value added producers are a very important nexus.
- Mike & Patricia Miller – their Christmas tree business has a short period of time (20 days) when they sell their product to consumers. They benefit from seeing what others are doing. Are there ways one farm can help another farm? They would like to have a way to be more involved in the AG community through the year. Farm Tour in fall is hard to target their audience. Looking to expand the types of products they sell, diversify.
- Someone noted that Whidbey Island has an internationally recognized identity as a charming get-away island.

- Identify the common threads important to all – regulations, policies, synergies, ...
- Whidbey Island Grown (WIG) was brought up – per David Bauermeister, it is on slow idle right now waiting to see what this group comes up with.
- Loren Imes – Diversity of all things grown under one brand can be seen as a benefit or asset. As a destination – the variety can be another draw. Something for everyone. Other nearby areas holding large events – marketing can appeal to all. Would like to increase other businesses awareness of all the products being grown here.
- See value in having a more cohesive voice, pull together all of island, north to south. We can work collectively on advocacy on the island. County Comp Plan, etc.
- Marketing/Education issue: Help folks from city to understand that our products are available for more than just the summer season. And that all things have their own season – raspberries are not available for picking in October (!)
- Our island partners, such as Goosefoot and Slow Food Whidbey, can be valuable resources – some folks have some high level skills and knowledge. Some may have more time to assist with monitoring things of concern, such as potential changes to regulations and policy.

Name for Organization

Name for the group – very open right now. **Send us your thoughts.** Some ideas so far:

- Whidbey Island Ag Association
- Whidbey Ag Guild or Whidbey Agriculture Guild
- Whidbey Farmers Guild
- Whidbey Island Grown – what about using this existing name?
 - brand is already there with a lot of pieces ready to go (website, Facebook, and more)
 - People do already recognize the name
 - Website has been updated – Joomla (?) , they can train us to work with it
 - Face Book interface, updated, though may need more
 - WIG supplies (bags and tags) are still with Judy/Organic Farm School.
 - Regarding membership – no one invoiced for 2016, waiting to see what we do
 - Discussion about standards set previously – not many farms meet the criteria. If interested in seeing what the standards are – go to www.WhidbeyIslandGrown.com
 - The criteria can be changed as we decide.
 - Updated for Food Hub – 75% of “defining” ingredient is produced by the farmer
 - Can someone from NABC help us work through review of the standards? Yes.
 - May want a separate name for the organization – something that more clearly identifies the organization as a group.
 - The only two universal terms are “producer” and “agriculture”
 - WIG brand would remain as an option or program under the organization
 - Many folks do not want to see all the work spent on developing WIG be dropped and would like to see it used in some capacity.
 - Guild covers more of the education, collaboration aspects
- “Whidbey Island Growers” is of interest to many, clarifies that it is an organization of farmers, not just a brand. Keep WIG as a program and update it. Alternative: Whidbey Island Growers Guild

Website for the Organization

- WIG website still up and running
- Farm Tour website gets a lot of traction
- Will need to coordinate the two websites – these can be combined into one and web traffic directed from both URLs to land on one site
- List Markets, CSAs, farms with links to individual farm info (websites, Facebook pages, etc.), could also have a U-Pick page.
- Need to set up a timeline for combining these websites
- CSA media publicity needs to be out by early March – John Burks will solicit current info for the websites
- Sarah C will solicit current info for this year’s markets

Other Marketing Opportunities

- Navy families tend to move at end of school year – they’ll be checking out web for info before they arrive. They also tend to use Facebook. Many folks being transferred from Hawaii base this year. The Oak Harbor base has a flyer rack – we could potentially create a flyer as a group (cannot promote individual businesses). Mike Miller will find out specific restrictions for a flyer.
- Oak Harbor Chamber may be able to help us with printing marketing materials (2% funds)

II. Puget Sound Fresh Advertising

Puget Sound Fresh – Prescott has been in communication with Sheryl Weiser, who is in charge of putting together the guide. Sheryl is passionate about getting more presence for Whidbey Island farmers. With the move to Seattle Tilth, she anticipates having more time to come to Whidbey and expand delivery of the guide here. Anza says Seattle Tilth, now fondly referred to as “Super Tilth”, is committed to supporting the Guide and to expanding its use and distribution. She distributes 500 to the Navy base.

Sheryl would like to see all the Whidbey farmers’ markets in the guide. She has reduced the price for a page ad as well. Prescott is back on Feb 12. She will continue to be the coordinator. Due date for the ad has been delayed to the end of this month.

Discussion

- WICD will send the updated info to the farmers list. Will coordinate with Prescott about sending info to all market coordinators and perhaps their board presidents.
- Chamber of Commerce Oak Harbor – they put together grab bags for Navy families when they arrive – could there be more available for this than the 500 that goes to the base?
- Can the online info be updated later in the year? (Those present think it is not likely but we can ask)

III. Whidbey Farm Map & Guide Update

Neither Peg nor Dorothy was available to attend the meeting. The following is their update provided from them by email:

Courtesy Report regarding Whidbey Stands, Stores, and Farms flyer

- 1 – Significant life events have delayed the process by about 10 days
- 2 – Funding for ferry placement has been secured
- 3 – Invitation letters are going out this week
- 4 – Printing is anticipated the middle/end of March

5 – Distribution plans are being finalized

6 – Distribution should be complete by the end of April

Please contact Peg or Dorothy with any questions: Peg: coupevillemarket@aol.com Dorothy: dorothy868@yahoo.com

IV. Goosefoot Farm Stand Directory

- Karen visited with Goosefoot about their guide. They feel they have capacity to update what they previously created. They'd like to keep their guide similar as last year for this year. They may be willing to entertain a combined effort in the future.
- On another note, Goosefoot is currently applying for a grant to put together a commercial kitchen in one of the south Whidbey schools. This kitchen will contribute to supporting production of value-added products, provide business incubator opportunities, which will hopefully provide an important avenue to achieve financially viable ag enterprises.

V. Farm Tour and Farm Tour Committee update

- The Farm Tour Committee (FTC) will continue to be available
- Funds remaining (\$7,260) will be available to help market events
- This will be farmer driven – let us know what you want to do, when, etc.
- The FTC will develop criteria for use of the funds. Criteria will continue to include natural resource management BMPs ala WICD
- Lydia – exploring idea for a paid tour/event – educational tour showing the path of creating local fiber from “farm to yarn”. Tour would include visits to sheep farms and her fiber production facility. Is this an option for use of Farm Tour funds? Would it work to charge participants? Others noted the chicken coop tour is paid by donation. Educational focus. Ag entertainment. Some noted that farm tour visitors comment how much they appreciate the tour being free. Perhaps this would be a good experiment in how to market a fee-based educational agri-tourism event.
- Added thought: Farm Tour name could be retained but applied to individual events. Examples:
 - Whidbey Island Farm Tour – Berry Festival
 - Whidbey Island Farm Tour – Farms of Ebey's Prairie

VI. Other Activities

- WICD building a list of Whidbey Farms
 - Current list will be sent with these notes – we appreciate your adding or updating the list
 - Current Use list – at some point it could be beneficial to send out a mailer to all those on this list to promote the organization
- Also building lists of Other Interested Parties and Partners.
- Island County Wellness – March last week (11:00 to 1:00) – an opportunity for farmers to promote their CSAs, markets, food stands. Anza will send out info when the schedule is set.

VII. Roundabout – Last Comments from each Attendee

- John Burks is new NABC board member; others are Karen Bishop, and Mary Margaret Haugen. Loren Imes is a past member.
- Claire – appreciates all we are doing to keep the network going

- Hal – growing consensus that WIG is creating an interconnected network of AG producers. Look forward to brand, website, relationships between producers and others using products, and support for a vibrant community. Sometimes feeling clarity and sometimes not. Especially regarding the brand standards.
- Mike & Patricia – happy to be here, not sure what we bring
 - John – the connection to the Navy base is excellent and very valuable
 - Military base personnel is very underutilized market
- Lydia – glad to come, appreciate the group’s perspectives
- Chris – need to meet regularly to help keep up the momentum, let’s set a regular day of the month
 - FFA Chapter started again in S Whidbey, focus on floral growing
 - Grange Food News changed to Free Range Food News. She can now write whatever she wants!
- Anza – Fair – expanding the veggie section of the fair. The preserves etc. are being moved to another building. They are looking for ideas for what else to do in the building. Send your ideas to Anza right away or contact Carol at the Fair
 - Karen – excited that Anza is now able to represent local AG at IC WSU Extension
- Kelsi – appreciate being here as a farm laborer for now
 - An idea to share: Tyler Hansen – FB - who would be interested in potluck style event with restaurants, farms, local residents – this could be a marketing tool (similar to Taste of Whidbey events)
 - She’ll try to get more of the younger set of farmers to attend
- Jerry - I’m seeing 2 themes –
 - marketing who we are to the outside world
 - Desire to work together, take advantage of the synergy – ex: he has a great location that maybe other farmers could tap into
 - So much info out there, yet we still don’t know each other’s needs and what others do.
- Loren – thanks to WICD and NABC for sticking with this for so long. He’s been here for 15 years, lots of interest to work together but hard to gel
 - Son home in summer, works at 3 different caterers – WI has become quite the destination for weddings and food events. Catering to the caterers can be a big win-win.
- Best days to have these meetings
 - Monday evenings seemed to work for most; second Mondays seem good for everyone – Confirmed with Sandy D. that Nordic Hall is available these days for the rest of the year.

Future Meetings – Second Monday of each Month

NEXT MEETING: March 14, 5:30 – 8:00, Nordic Hall

Whidbey Farmers Meeting – March 16, 2016

Announcements

- Several agriculture **workshops** are coming up in the next few weeks. Flyers were passed out. List with information links can be found at the end of these notes.
- **Island County Local Food Fair:** Would like to have local farmers at tables to talk about farming, what they produce, and how to obtain products: CSAs, markets, roadside stands, stores. Need to sign up for a space. Tuesday March 29, 2016, 11:30 – 1:30, IC Commissioner’s Hearing Room (B102). Hosted by IC Government #Employee Wellness Committee.
- **Farm Safety Workshops** – Tim Lawrence, WSU Extension: Proposed tractor certification program for U-17 takes 24 hours, might wait until fall to do it as we are getting into growing season and it will take some time to organize. In the meantime, considering offering short evening classes on north and south Whidbey: offer brief overview this spring to increase awareness of occupational hazards. 2 hour sessions to be coming in next 6 weeks. Watch for announcements.
 - Question: Can these be offered when interns are here? [for some farms, interns arrive in April/May] Might do some now, and some later to accommodate those who can’t participate in the near term.

Featured Topic - Tangible Personal Property Tax

Mary Engle, Island County Assessor was unable to join us this evening, so provided a FAQ for us to review (a copy was attached to the meeting reminder email). A lively discussion was had on the details of the regulations. If you have any questions, feel free to submit to Sarah Cassatt or Karen Bishop at the Conservation District to compile and submit to Mary or contact Mary directly.

Collaborative Marketing

Puget Sound Fresh Annual Farm Guide: Prescott is organizing a Whidbey Island Map page as collaborative marketing effort. Goal is to get a draft of the map with all farms and markets who want to participate by March 21/22. The more farms, the lower the price.

Whidbey Country Farms Map & Guide:

- Many farms find this brochure to be of great benefit – many visitors use it to find local farms and markets
- The group wishes to offer support to Peg & Dorothy if they still plan to move forward.
- Alternatively, if Peg & Dorothy are not able to accomplish their goal, the 2015 brochure can be updated for use this year (NABC has offered to send the file and Sandy at WICD office has same software and ability to update). Estimate cost of preparing and printing brochure, plus labor involved in contacting the farms. Suggestion: provide a space for farms not open to the public to list where they sell. (Goosefoot map not joining forces with us, yet.) NABC has heard from Whidbey Camano Tourism that they again want to have their section of the map and a few farms who usually advertise in the map are also ready to do so again.

- Suggestion: Blake Mannella could be invited to draw up a map or artwork that would be different and eye catching.
- Task force to move forward on producing the brochure as needed: Anza, Sarah C. John B., Arwen, maybe Sarah R.

2016 CSA Farms List

An updated draft CSA list handed out in form of 2-sided rack card (brochure size). Any missing farms, corrections, or ideas of where to distribute them, contact Sarah C at WICD.

- Suggestion: Add definition of a CSA.

Farm Tour Events

Reminder: Farm Tour Committee open to proposals for smaller events this year.

- Tilth farmers are preparing something that involves fund-raising – would that disqualify the event?

Organization Business

Revisit and clarify who this group represents and what the goals are:

- Overall – those present want the group to be all-inclusive of agriculture and related entities. Local food (produce, meat, eggs), fiber, flowers, horticultural, other livestock businesses such as horse farms that are business based. What about those who keep livestock for personal enjoyment? Most are very tied to local ag, purchasing hay and other products grown here. Wineries are clearly defined in WA, but there are many kinds of wineries. Processors. Agri-tourism. Supporters of local agriculture. **Ideas and thoughts on this topic appreciated.**
- We see this as an Umbrella Agriculture Association –Farmers need a support group. Island County might be supportive of agriculture or not so much, so farmers need to join together to work on common issues.
 - Focus on what is beneficial to everyone.
 - “All Farms Matter”
 - The most common element is simply: “Agriculture”
- Whidbey Island Grown standards discussed. Those standards need to be revisited, explored, interest in expanding the earlier definition/criteria.
 - Each farm defines itself by/to its standards
 - Suggestion: form a sub-group of interested individuals to work on this.
- Need to select a name for the organization. Sarah C will send out a poll on names.

Topics for Programs:

- Group GAP was brought up as an important topic of interest to several farmers present. Some institutions require GAP certification. There is a great deal of paperwork involved. By joining together, farms can reduce cost of inspection. Both Claire Lichtenfels and John Burks have been looking into this and are finding there are procedures and practices in the program they would like to implement on

their farms. Would like assistance. Suggestion: bring in an expert to put together a workshop for interested farms.

- Island County Policy – the Comp Plan update will affect rules about agricultural activity in the County. Would like Commissioners to clearly define their intentions/goals for ag activities in the county, including changes to rules. Very important to engage in this process. Consider inviting them to come to a meeting in the very near future.
- Farm Intern Program, L&I standards. This is an experimental program unique to WA. Needs participants to determine its value. Lots of interest in the group. Anza Muenchow to see if she can bring someone to talk about this at the April meeting.
- WWOOF – Willing Workers on Organic Farms. An international program supporting cultural exchange and perhaps provide a little labor assistance to farms. The program links travelers with organic farms where they can stay in exchange for helping out on the farm. Sarah Richards is going to try this.
- Water issues related to agriculture – Karen at WICD is working on putting together a program.

Next Meeting:

Monday, April 11, 2016 5:30 – 8:00, Nordic Hall, Coupeville

Events & Workshops Coming Up

Date	Title	Organizer
April 26 6 pm Coupeville	Farm Safety Awareness Workshop	IC WSU Extension Coupeville Rec Hall
<i>Note: Check WICD Calendar page for new listings approximately weekly.</i>		

Whidbey Farmers Meeting 4.11.16

Featured Program – Small Farm Internship Project

Presenter: Kelly Kane, Washington Labor and Industries

- Wa state has the first legal farm internship in the country.
- Your program must have a curriculum – can use ATTRA's website curriculum. Note when you are going to have business meetings, etc.
- Can hire up to 3 interns at any given time. One year certifications for employer. KELLY sends out renewal reminders a few weeks prior to expiration of the annual permit.
- Employment standards with L & I are met by participating in farm intern program.
- Track hours that intern works and report L & I on whichever L & I classification they are working in.
- Kelly conducts interviews with farmer and intern. Also there is a complaint process.
- Can't fire experienced employee to bring in an intern.
- IRS – information is available from Kelly
- Contact Debra Moder to set up business license – account number for L & I account.

Meeting Discussion

Collaborative Marketing Efforts

Puget Sound Fresh Farm Guide:

- Based on current number of farms, the cost for the listing on the Whidbey page is \$63.16 per farm. The total cost for the page is \$1,700. Goosefoot has contributed through The Goose, gave \$500.

Whidbey Island Farm Map:

- Peg Tennant and Dorothy Mueller are moving forward with it. WICD has sent their contact info farmguide2016@hotmail.com to the WICD farmers list. E mail Peg/Dorothy to be included.

Whidbey Island Roadside Farm Stand and Farm Store Directory:

- Lis David of Goosefoot is updating the farm stand brochure. It is free. Send your info to her ASAP. lis@goosefoot.org

Whidbey CSAs Rack Card:

- WICD is updating from last year, please update with your CSA info.

Access to Naval Air Station Whidbey Island:

- Progress being made via EDC and Oak Harbor Chamber of Commerce - they will get us into the Navy's new personnel orientation session. Lots of Navy people have no idea

what is available on the island. Several items can go into their packet, such as brochures and maps. The Oak Harbor Chamber is enthusiastic to help get info on base.

- Karen will bring a request to join Chamber to WICD board.

Discussion:

- Discussed how to get farms on maps that don't want visitors at their farms. Maybe having a star denoting participation at each market, and another star for general wholesale sales.

Identification of Agricultural Production on Whidbey Island

- WICD maps what crops are growing in which fields across the island, about every three years for WA State Dept. of Ag.
- Number of farms needs to come from the census.
- How much land is in Current Use program?
- Does WSU Extension have mapping info too?

Grant Opportunities

David Bauermeister, NABC

- Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP) - marketing grants available. Might be helpful for this group. May 12 is deadline. Need from this group: Consensus. Letters of support. Communicate needs to NABC. If anyone else is applying, please advise. Grants are for any direct sales, farmers markets, CSAs, farm stands. One grant would be good for the whole island, due to minimum grant size of \$50,000. Other marketing, too.
 - Farmers' Market Leadership (brainstorming for partners for FMPP grant)
 - Martha Olsen is treasurer of Coupeville Farmers' Market
 - Dorothy is president of Coupeville market
 - Sheila CS is president of OH market
 - (Note: WICD and WSU decided not to go forward with a proposal this year. Need more clarity of goals to warrant time investment to write grant).
- Food Hub, a very few Whidbey farms are involved. Farm to School came through Food Hub, day care in Seattle orders a lot. People from this group could band together to get produce to Hub. Food Hub will launch into its own entity in a couple of years. Charlie's Produce back hauls.
- Value Added Producer Grants (VAPG) RFP is out now. Due in July. In-kind match can be labor and/or produce.

Name for This Group

- We can't yet agree. Need to discuss when we're not tired. ☹

Next Meeting:

Monday, May 9, 2016, 6:30 – 8:30, Nordic Hall, Coupeville

(Please note new start time – so we can get a little bit more farming done!)

Whidbey Farmers Meeting – May 9, 2016

PROGRAM: How to Identify Your Farm's Zoning Code and What Activities are Allowed

Island County Planning Department – Michelle Pezley, Greg Goforth, Current Use Planners

- New website – new resources available to public (has been running for just about a month)
 - www.Islandcountywa.gov
 - Subscribe to email updates – Comp Plan, CAO
- Links to resources on lead page
 - Maps link
 - Interactive maps (far left) → series of different maps you have access to. Acreage, ownership,
 - Land use interactive map – zoning - most useful for this topic
 - Layers
 - Search bar – enter address
 - Binocular icon – look up by parcel number, owner, etc.
 - Stack of squares – full layer list, turn on or off; printer icon to print map; legend 2nd from right. Use arrows in window to get more info; click on arrow 3rd time shows zoning designation; click more info link to go to that zones' code; GIS layer is very accurate, update as find inaccuracies (contact Becca Blackman in IC Assessor's office regarding accuracy level). Only accurate for county but may still be able to get parcel number in local city jurisdictions.
 - JPA – Joint Planning Area between county and town
 - Shoreline Master Program – shoreline management act (state). Includes everything within 200 feet inward from ordinary high water mark.
 - Mapping page has county shoreline designations – there are a variety of environmental designation → buffer setbacks are determined by shoreline environmental designation.
 - Example: Maxwellton Valley – Shoreline includes associated streams and wetlands – Rural Conservancy shoreline designation affects reviews of permits. Dependent on hydraulic connection. Some of these areas need to be verified on the ground as original mapping used very high elevation photography.
 - While in one layer, you can change the base map you are using: the 2nd icon on right – 4 squares – takes you to the Base Map Gallery
 - CAO interactive map
 - If critical area mapped, it may call out type/category
 - Steep slopes are shown in red overlay
 - Unstable slopes are mapped orange – see legend for color codes
 - Saltwater intrusion – might have a map in 2036 website – not sure
 - All mapping units can be verified in the field. The map is used as a starting point.
 - How many zones can you farm in? Most zones with a “rural” designation
 - How to determine what you can do on your site – if you have idea for new activity:
 - Always start with parcel's zone – then go to code for that zone

- Permitted uses – Type 1 process
- Conditional uses – Type 2 process
- Prohibited uses
- If something completely new – see zoning interpretation process
- Find code directly on website: Go to “Departments”, scroll down to “Planning & Community Development”, on left select “County Code”, then “Title 17”, which also includes CAO, Ebey’s Landing and Shoreline Master Program
 - Ebey’s Landing → Planning – link to Ebey’s Landing, link to Map
 - Review Area 1 – more public view, can landscape to screen your development provides more flexibility.
 - Review Area 2 – less review, more flexibility
 - Navy Clear Zone – the code is difficult to understand –Planning Department can help with interpretations/ they might need to research the scenario for you.
- 2036 Comp Plan – Website posts updates on the process: www.islandcounty2036.org
 - Resources
 - Updates archive

Roundtable

- New participant introduction: Kim Tiller – Whidbey Island Natural – name of future farm
- Anza – overview of first Farm Safety Workshop – 3 speakers, went well.
 - One of the topics learned is call “normalization of deviancy”. For more info, search on You Tube for “Stopping Normalization of Deviancy”, Mike Mullane.
 - Will schedule a second class on south end in June. Let Anza know if you are interested, time and day(s) that work for you, Monday or Wednesday (360-678-2343)
- Farm Safety certification course this fall, approximately 20 hours, Tim Lawrence organizing
- Cultivating Success – 3 courses – want to pull from all 3 to make one course (Oct – Nov) Anza
- Patty Imes – interested in getting WIG brand going again. Form a subcommittee of folks interested to get this going. She may be interested in helping to organize. Make a note on sign-in sheet if interested. Judy likely has the supplies. David Bauermeister is interested and can provide background.
- WICD Board is discussing marketing programs and materials to NAS Whidbey by going through the OH Chamber. The District is exploring joining the Oak Harbor Chamber and maybe more of them. If WICD can represent all of the farmers, then could pass material through this avenue for now. Later as Whidbey Ag group gets more formal, the organization can join. Vintners trade off trying to cover all meetings. This group could do the same. Goal is to have more info by next meeting.
- Sarah Richards - June 11 is the screening of Film Slam Videos of Ebey’s Landing. At Coupeville School auditorium.
- Future Program Topics
 - John Burks – suggests education around Puget Sound Food Hub be a future topic.
 - General taxes discussion
 - Rural event center rules; Karen Bishop says the Hearings Examiner for IC is very knowledgeable (covers larger area than just IC)
 - Code issues relevant to agriculture, code writers – form a subcommittee on this

- These were all deemed of interest – let's do these as we can get a knowledgeable speaker for each topic.

Attentions: Next Meeting will be a special meeting at Greenbank Farm:

Whidbey Farmers Potluck & Meeting

Main Program: *Whidbey Island Grown Brand Discussion*

Monday, June 13, 2016, 6:30 – 8:30, Big Red Barn, Greenbank Farm

Featured Topic: Moving Forward with Whidbey Island Grown (WIG) Brand

- David Bauermeister – overview of WIG
 - Started about 2008 – 2009. Original team: Vicki Brown, Georgie Smith, Anza Muenchow, Marc Wilson, Sarah Richards
 - NABC worked with the group to identify needs, obtained grant from Wasington Community Trade and Economic Development to help pay for program, plus charitable donation, seed money paid for staff time
 - Identified needs of producers; conducted survey through Whidbey Island Farm Forum
 - Basis for branding developed by the farmers – wanted standards for production, vetted widely, some thought too strict, some not enough. David has the original standards
 - Hired a Bellingham company to put the brand together – used a rigorous process to develop the brand logo and name
 - Gary did outreach, press releases, presentations
 - Rural Economic Development money was used to hire Sherrye Wyatt to help put energy into the WIG brand. She was putting in at least 10 hours per week. (She probably put in quite a few more hours she was not paid for.) She developed Facebook site and still posts to it every week on a volunteer basis. She feels the WIG program aligns very well with tourism.
 - Funding ended 2014 – program static since then. At peak, 13 sponsors/members
 - The website is still being hosted by NABC – we can use that at any time.
 - Started second project to develop branded program for fresh meat, the Goose Market was a player. Island grown cooperative in Bow – worked with them to do fresh meat. Market wasn't big enough for the amount being produced. Program was discontinued.
- The WIG program has tapered off without Sherrye. Officially, the Greenbank Management Group took it over, but did not end up moving forward with it. Takes a fairly consistent effort to keep it going.
- One issue during this time period – 3 overlapping marketing tools: Whidbey Island Farm Map (year-round farms), WI Farm Tour, WIG – three separate efforts seeking sponsors and volunteers

Where to go from here:

- Possible standards to consider, use as a starting point:
 - Food alliance
 - Organic
 - Naturally raised
 - Certified naturally grown

- Animal welfare
 - Disallowed chemicals
- 3-tiered marketing plan:
 - for on-island marketing
 - for off-island marketing
 - for visitors coming to farms
- Level 2 – Restaurants and stores could be WIG members
- Level 3 – general public to be sponsor members to help support the effort

- Ingredients for value added products – percentage of locally grown. Food hub is 75%, but it is the defining ingredient that has to be 75% from the locale.
- Some conventional farms left out due to anti-biotic treatment of livestock. Synthetic pesticides needed by traditional farmers. Could find ways to include others
 - Conventional farmers may want to participate, play a role in some way
 - Transparent labelling
 - Get comments from all types of farmers on the island
- San Juan Islands are working on a similar “island-grown” program . They started with a member fee but eliminated the fee to get more members
 - Spent 9 years to create a year-round market (building in Friday Harbor – developed a strong partnership, raised half the money for the building and program
- Lead program organizer – a farmers’ market manager might be interested in adding part-time work on WIG to current work.
- Farmers Market Promotion Program grant – could help get started
 - Continued funding after grant complete – membership fees, sponsorships, fundraising events, etc.
 - NABC is willing to support to go forward
 - Need a lead entity
 - The grant could be used to develop the organization
 - Port Susan has won a grant two years in a row to continue to build program; second grant was to relocate the market
 - They have been able to show very good results, had a great manager
 - They have one market
 - City of Stanwood was applicant – they became an active partner, Chamber became a supporter
 - David thinks we should have a great chance of getting funded
 - Our IC Commissioners are very supportive of farmers
 - Seems we need food-related/value-added products and services to help make economically viable
- Discussion regarding interest in moving forward on re-developing, re-energizing the WIG program
 - Imes – they actively use the merchandising materials, feel organization is helpful

- John interested in what can be done to develop it – need to create the overarching organization, need lead person who is able to unify the island
- An organization is needed to trademark the brand
- Anna doesn't see farmers ready to organize to such a level
 - She would like standards open to more farmers, she likes the twist ties, bags, stickers etc. Doesn't have energy to contribute to organizational activities
- Stephen – likes the idea, cost is a concern, finding a good person. If not ready to put together a more formal organization and process, he likes Anna's idea to at least make use of materials already developed.
- Loren – understands the concerns, could see doing the first step for now, if it can grow that would be great. What can we do immediately to keep it going?
 - Farmers Markets, grocery stores – make more use of the existing materials
 - Facebook – needs assistance
 - Chris – tourism event to help bring in funds and interested people to support it.
 - Port Susan – lots of benefit to the Community. They have a more geographically focused community. Farmers Market was the focus
 - Georgie has proved that you can use the branding and take it to the mainland
- John – how many farmers are marketing off-island? Compare value of on-island marketing to off-island, identify target market for each farm
 - Local markets include local and off-island farmers
 - Grocery stores
 - Loren – we are continuing to expand awareness about local farms
 - Anna – How much value of additional marketing efforts vs. the cost – aren't people who are looking for local food successful in finding us using on-line tools?
 - Whidbey island residents – signs to farms from the highway – they need to see signs/names often enough to start paying attention/get info ingrained

Roundtable Announcements

- Brief report on status of organic farmland at Greenbank Farm
 - Letter from port of Coupeville – they are inviting ideas from the community for use of farm. Send ideas to Forrest Rambo
 - The land is still leased to the school. There are seed crops growing there this year. Nathaniel and Annie have some seed crops there too.
 - Lease ends in end of March 2017
 - Christie O'Donnell would love to see a collaborative, value-added project

- IC Planning Committee – **Farm worker housing:** Concerned about landowners circumventing housing density limits. Talked about internship program, seasonal labor. They will continue to work on this idea and bring it back to the public. Don't want to destroy farming/ag open space. Don't want permanent foundations. State WAC is not appropriate for Whidbey's situation.
 - Concerns about using camping as temporary housing for workers. Extended camping only allowed in campgrounds. They will work on creating a better definition for "temporary" housing.
 - Watch for emails regarding this topic and when it is time for input.
- Sarah moving to Arizona end of July to provide care for her elders.

Next Meeting:

Monday, July 11, 2016 6:30 – 8:30, Nordic Hall, Coupeville

TOPIC: Food Hub

Events & Workshops Coming Up

Date & Time	Title	Organizer & Location
June 29, Wed 5:30 - 7:30 pm	Small Farm Irrigation Get prepared for the summer season! Presented in collaboration with WSU Skagit County Extension with support from USDA Risk Management Agency.	Viva Farms 15366 Ovenell Rd Mount Vernon, WA RSVP at vivafarms.eventbrite.com
July 27, Wed 5:30 - 7:30 pm	Weed Management Techniques for Small-Scale Farms Looking for strategies to battle weeds on your farm this season? Join us for a workshop on weed management for small organic production systems. The workshop will focus on control techniques with hands-on field demos and activities. Bring your hand tools for practice.	Viva Farms 15366 Ovenell Rd Mount Vernon, WA RSVP at vivafarms.eventbrite.com
July 27, Wed 5:30 - 7:30 pm	Pest management for Small Organic Production Systems Interested in learning more about pest management on your small farm? The workshop will focus on management techniques with field demonstrations and activities.	Viva Farms 15366 Ovenell Rd Mount Vernon, WA RSVP at vivafarms.eventbrite.com