VALUE CHAIN COORDINATION: 
MAKING MATCHES

A Greenbelt Fund and National Good Food Network Webinar 
September 20, 2018
Webinar Overview

- Tech Orientation
- Welcome
- Matchmaking in Three Contexts
  - University
  - Nonprofit
  - Consultant
- Q & A
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Ellie Bomstein
Wallace Center at Winrock International
About the Wallace Center

The Wallace Center develops partnerships, pilots new ideas, and advances solutions to strengthen communities through resilient farming and food systems.

- National Focus • Systems Change
- Multi-Sector Partnerships • Market-Based Solutions

Key Strategies
- Peer Networking and Outreach
- Capacity Building, Training and Technical Assistance
- Documenting and Sharing Replicable Models and Innovations
- Applied Research and Knowledge Development
HOW TO FIND US

▪ Wallacecenter.org

▪ NGFN.org
Greenbelt Fund
Local Food Value Chain Coordination Webinar Series

• The Greenbelt Fund supports and enhances the viability, integrity, and sustainability of agriculture in Ontario and Ontario’s Greenbelt.

• Through grants, educational workshops, webinars, and networking initiatives, the Greenbelt Fund’s goal is to create systemic change to permanently increase the amount of local food consumed in Ontario.

Sign up for the Greenbelt Fund newsletter to stay up-to-date on the next webinar!
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Rebecca Dunning
NC State Center for Environmental Farming Systems
Universities and Market/Match Making

- **Goal**: Increase economic viability of small/mid-scale food and farm businesses and farm-based communities
- **Making matches and making markets, the Approach**: create linkages, leverage partnerships, provide indirect support

Rebecca_dunning@ncsu.edu
Universities and Market/Match Making

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Rebecca_dunning@ncsu.edu
Roles of the Value Chain Coordinator*

- Technical Assistance Provider
- Matchmaker
- Policy/Thought Leader
- Convener
- Catalyst/Innovator
- Resource Prospector

*Food Value Chains: Creating Shared Value to Enhance Marketing Success, USDA AMS 2014.
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Market/Match Making Activities

- Build Capacity
- Build Relationships
- Create Enabling Environments
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Market/Match Making Activities

- **Build Capacity**
- **Build Relationships**
- Create Enabling Environments
**Grower-Buyer Event**

Regularly repeated – every year or twice-yearly at ongoing meetings/conferences

Incorporate feedback but reliably scripted

 Appropriately matches buyers and sellers

Proliferate with light-handed guidance
Matchmaker

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Planning Timeline

One Month Ahead:
- Identify a moderator and ensure other roles, such as check-in and setup, are filled.
- Conduct follow-up with farmers – some may require phone or paper mail invitations.
- Prepare the information guide and half-page instruction sheets for buyers and growers.
- Identify a local caterer for refreshments during the event.

Two Weeks Ahead:
- Email Info Guide for growers and for buyers, and send out half-page farm info template.
- Make reminder phone calls to farmers.
- Confirm all details of the schedule with the moderator, caterer (if applicable), and setup team.
- Confirm all wholesale buyers/distributors who will be present.
- Re-send electronic reminder for registration to grower lists and other marketing sources.
- Make direct calls to farmers who received paper invitations and may not respond online.

One Week Ahead:
- Print all materials (including additional info page copies for those who may not bring them).
- Pre-load all presentations onto a thumb drive, and verify that a computer and projector are available.
- Check registration for a final head count and send the total number of meals needed to the caterer.
- Verify final number of attendees with the venue or office manager. Send final reminder email to all participants and include directions, parking information, and the agenda or schedule for the day.
Matchmaker
Build Relationships
Build Capacity

Technical Assistance Provider

Grower - Single Buyer Facility Tour
Technical Assistance
Matchmaker
Build Capacity
Build Relationships
Buyers as Trainers
Technical Assistance

Matchmaker

Build Capacity

Build Relationships

Buyers as Trainers
Single Grower - Single Buyer
On-Site Meeting
Project Meeting with Value Chain Collaborators
Project Meeting Includes Value Chain Collaborators
DO YOU WANT TO BE A PART OF THE LOCAL FOODS REVOLUTION?

Apply to be a Local Food Supply Chain Apprentice!

Now in its fourth year, North Carolina Growing Together’s (NCGT) Local Food Supply Chain Apprenticeship is accepting applicants for the Summer of 2018. Gain experience related to local food systems and supply chains while working with the organizations that are making this happen in North Carolina!

Through a paid, eight-week, summer program, apprentices will have the opportunity to work with one of the following:
- Lowes Foods (Winston-Salem)
- Freshpoint Inc. (Raleigh-Durham)
- Working Landscapes (Warrenton)
- Piedmont Food and Agricultural Processing Center (Hillsborough)
- TRACTOR Food and Farms (Burnsville)
- Feast Down East (Burgaw)
- Firsthand Foods (Durham)
Information Portal for Small Business Center Counselors

Create an Enabling Environment
Core Message:

Have Matchmaking threaded throughout University programming; must be seen as dependable and balanced; and encourage spread through other partners and networks—resist being territorial.

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CEFS supply chain initiatives NC Growing Together and Ufoods have been supported by the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative competitive grant nos. 2013-68004-20363 and 556008-09246. Whole Crop Harvest is supported by Southern SARE, award no. 571385-02452.
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Jay McGhee
Family Farmed
Value Chain Coordination:  
A Review of Family Farmed Matchmaking
agenda

- Matchmaker Role and Responsibility
- Family Farmed Matchmaking Evolution
- The Backstory: Buyer, Distributor A, Distributor B
- The Process
- The Result: Buyers Perspective, Distributor A outcome, Distributor B outcome
- Observations and Lessons Learned
- Questions?

“GOOD FOOD ON EVERY TABLE.”

Family Farmed is a non-profit organization committed to expanding the production, marketing and distribution of locally grown and responsibly produced food, in order to enhance the social, economic, and environmental health of our communities.
Family Farmed Market Development Role

- Relationship builder
- Connector
- Facilitator
Identified a need for a middle man or broker without a cost associated for the farmer.

Met the need through seeking grant funding to cover the cost typically associated with a broker.

Uniquely positioned to act in this capacity as a result of pre-existing buyer relationships.

We have developed relationships with both the buyer and the seller which allows us to build trust and have transparency in the matchmaking process.

We act as a truly neutral party in these transactions as the success of both parties is in the best interest of all parties.

2004 Good Food Expo

2008 Farmer Training Program

2011 Good Food Financing & Innovation

2014 Good Food Accelerator

2017 Market Development
The Backstory

Buyer

Large mid-west grocery chain
150+ outlets

“Locally Made” initiative increase by approximately 30% over prior year

Implemented a “Locally Grown” initiative

Identified a need for a more streamlined approach to accessing growers

Conversations with Family Farmed resulted in a matchmaking opportunity
The Backstory

Distributor A

Small scale distributor
 Works with local and or sustainable growers
 Approximately 40 growers in the network
 New alliance formed in 2018
 Previously unsuccessful in securing a meeting with the buyer
 Sought out Family Farmed for assistance in connecting with the buyer
Backstory

Distributor B

Mid-sized distributor
Works with growers in the Midwest region
100+ growers in the network
Previously unsuccessful in securing a meeting with the buyer independently
Sought out Family Farmed for assistance with connection
Meetings held with buyer to assess their specific needs

Meetings held with distributors A & B to discuss their capacity and buyer needs to assess fit

Follow up meetings and email communications between distributors in advance of scheduled buyer meeting
Buyer was pleased with both presentations
Buyer reached a successful agreement with Distributor A
Buyer and Distributor B could not meet on price
Buyer remains interest in potential partnership with Distributor B
The result
Distributor A perspective
Observations and lessons learned

1. Trust building is essential on both sides of the deal.
2. Not all matches will be successful.
3. Your initial assessment may not always be accurate.
4. There are no rights or wrongs, only matches and mismatches.
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Sarah Fritschner
Grow Kentucky
Grow Kentucky
Building Farm to Table Capacity
Farm market sales = $8,000,000

Total food expenditures, $173,000,000,000

Source: ERS/USDA 2014

Farmers markets are .000046% of food expenditures
Building a different kind of food system
Custom Food Solutions owner Mike Higgins

Determine the market and find the right product
Healthy, hunger-free kids act 2010
CFS products and requirements

- Cheesy chicken and chili, butternut and sweet potatoes need to be cleaned, peeled, seeded and cut into chunks
- For broccoli soup, we needed it cleaned and diced
- For salsa and pizza sauce, tomatoes need to be ripe and clean
- For vegan chili, corn needs to be removed from the cob

All products need to be frozen for extended season
FYI: Butternut squash vs punkin

Libby, which packs the majority of the pumpkin used for pie in this country, uses a variety of squash more closely related to butternut than the jack-o-lantern pumpkin.
Farmer/processor and his broccoli

- Made broccoli soup over several months until one batch (2000 lbs = 250 gallons) was off-flavored.
- Farmer/processor had not blanched broccoli before freezing and it became bitter over time.
- Many months of post-harvest handling and processing best practices discouraged farmer.
- Broccoli turned out unsustainable for farm/process production.
Working with auction house to buy “canners”

- CFS ordered 20,000 lbs “canners” based on verbal commitments but no contract from customers
- 20,000 lbs is huge inventory that makes Mike uncomfortable; sustainability?
- The latest: Bugs!
A farmer 4 counties away has capability to grow, clean, husk, silk, wash, trim, and freeze corn

• $1500 minimum delivery cost, which is fine
• Schools buy waaaaayyyyy more corn
• CFS further away = pain in the ***
Other issues

• The farmer plants, grows, harvests. What happens after that?
• Who holds the inventory?
• Related to inventory is seasonality. A growing season might be 3 or 4 months, markets are all year.
• Markets are tough
Preparing for the long haul
Questions And Answers

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WEBINARS ARE ARCHIVED

http://ngfn.org/webinars
Value Chain Coordination Webinar Series

- **Getting Started**
  - Some definitions, and how one begins VCC work in a community

- **Bringing People Together**
  - The art and science of “convening”

- **Making Matches**
  - Effective “market matchmaking”

- **Creating Partnership Through Policy – Oct 25**
  - Intelligent government and inter-business policies

http://ngfn.org/webinars

All webinars include
- Instructive and inspirational stories
- Different, relatable perspectives
- How to measure impacts
STRONGER AS COMMUNITIES

▪ Food Hubs
  ▪ bit.ly/foodhubtalk

▪ Value-Added Processing
  ▪ bit.ly/proctalk

▪ Food Systems Leadership Network
  ▪ wallacecenter.org/fsln

Want more information about any of these?

Let us know in the post-webinar survey.
Food Systems Leadership Network
www.wallacecenter.org/fsln

- A national Community of Practice for staff and leaders of non-profit, community-based organizations working on food systems change.

- Content, services and opportunities tailored to food-focused non-profit sector
  - subscribe to our Visionary Voices podcast on iTunes!

- Must be 501c3 to benefit from services; priority support to emerging leaders, people of color & historically excluded communities

- Mini-grants, Scholarships, Mentorships, Non-profit Bootcamp Series, Leadership Retreats and More!
SEEKING 2020 CONFERENCE HOST PARTNERS!

- Are you a place-based local food org looking to increase the visibility of your work and your region? We’d love you to be the host partner for our 2020 NGFN Conference!
- Apply here: [https://www.wallacecenter.org/2020Host](https://www.wallacecenter.org/2020Host)
- Deadline is October 22nd!
HTTP://NGFN.ORG

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