Executive Director Report

May 26, 2020
Fundraising:

Awarded!!

- **ND Natural Resources Trust** $8,800 for staff time, refreshments and intern stipend

Pending:

- **Specialty Crop Block Grant** $78,450 programs and staff, 2 yrs (10/1/2020 – 09/30/2022) (notification in May)
- **USDA BFRDP** - $45,942 for planning activities, part of funds go to Candeska Cikana Community College ($14,642 to FARRMS)
- **USDA Rural Development** – subaward of $16,000 under application from Northern Plains RC&D Council, provide Farm Beginnings in Devils Lake

To Write:

- Clif Bar Foundation – due 6/1 ($5000)
- Otto Bremer Trust – due 6/20 ($45,000)

E-mails to schedule donor phone calls – relationship building

Appeal letter – support

Improve donations site on website – set up monthly giving by autopay
Operations:

Pricing out health plans for employees. Exploring Health Reimbursement Arrangements (HRAs)

Exploring HR Support offered as a benefit of our insurance policy – Excelerator Consulting

Working out cost of changing Program Coordinator position to hourly, benefitted as of August 1, 2020

Working out challenges with mail – We were doing mail forwarding to Jennifer’s home. Allowed it to expire but challenges with Tuttle Post Office

Still exploring options for outreach and office support.
Programs:

Farm Beginnings completed 3/28, final two session on Zoom. Glen Philbrick in attendance to advise on business plans.

- Aquaponics business startup (I’m working with him on loans and grants, refining business plan)
- Mushroom growing systems
- Lavender production
- T & L Meats, Pettibone (Locally grown and processed Holstein beef)
- Farm in the Dell of the Red River Valley – CSA farm that provides employment for youth with developmental disabilities
- Idea for urban farm to serve people with disabilities in Grand Forks
- Herb production (matched with a mentor)

Intern program: 10 interns placed on 8 farms, orientation went well. They started on their farms on 5/18

- Growing Together
- Doubting Thomas Farm
- Bear Creek Winery
- Stable Days Youth Ranch
- Dakota College at Bottineau/Aspen Hills Farm (Aquaponics focus)
- Family Roots Farm, Christine ND (south of Fargo)
- Heart and Soil Farm
- Farm in the Dell
Programs (continued)

Farmers market internship program: Finalize intern/market matches this week, paperwork, orientation June 13, finalizing handbook and preparing weekly learning curriculum (marketing focus)

• Minot Farmers Market
• North Prairie Farmers Market (Minot)
• Spirit Lake Mobile Market
• BisMarket
• Red River Market
• Town Square Farmers Market

Mentorship program: 2 matches made – Ryan Pesch mentoring Sam Rydell; Holly Mawby mentoring Jolynn Lentz, will start recruitment for September 1 start in early July

Apprenticeship Program: (Was meant to provide HR training and a small grant for farmers who want to employ workers.) still on hold, will determine if there is a need for this with a survey in late summer
New opportunities:

Local Food Marketing Series

Online Marketing and Sales
Marketing to Grocery stores and Co-ops

Online Marketing – funded by NC SARE and ND SARE and ND Farmers Market and Growers Assn.

NICE Center – provides free one on one technical assistance to help farmers set up online stores or websites

June 18 – Intro to Online Marketing Webinar
• 3 farmers – panel discussion on their experience online marketing
• intro to the NICE Center and their one on one technical assistance
• time for questions
• link for farmers to sign up for assistance

July 2 – Food Safety and Online Sales
Food safety instructor, farmer, health district officer
Difference between online marketing and online sale; considerations for value added producers; safety regulations

Both webinars recorded and uploaded to our website for people to view. Farmer Chat in late July on marketing.
Rural Grocers Initiative has created a video to encourage sales of locally grown produce at rural grocery stores. We will help promote and share the video and will host a farmer chat (July?) for farmers with questions about marketing at local grocery stores.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7ACnhcr-Kr8

Small working group (Holly Mawby, Jiggs Dyste with ND Grocers Assoc. and Clarice Kesler, Mary Stumpf and Lori Capouch from NDAREC) that is pulling this together without a budget.

Additional resources will be posted to www.ndsmallfarms.com

They are requesting that we help share the video.

“We are also learning from people like you how to better use the resources. We like the idea of a video chat between producers and grocers and would welcome other ideas that will help build the relationship. In essence, we are depending on partner organizations to help us launch, promote, think and deliver. Your group may also help us come up with the appropriate links we need to include on the webpage.”

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7ACnhcr8
Outreach:
Brand Board (link)
Greater emphasis on farmers, building relationships and connections
Website will have blog and farmer profiles added. Main page will show well-written profiles of five farmers exemplifying each of our programs
Refining “Partner Farmer” –

Partner Farmers are our team of farmer educators who share their experience by teaching, mentoring, hosting tours and spread the word about our programs. In return for their time and expertise, FARRMS provides Partner Farmers with marketing support, professional development, conference scholarships, priority in loan and grant applications, and financial reimbursement for selected teaching and mentoring activities.

Partner Farmers help us reach our audience by sharing testimonials, photos, short cell-phone videos, and promote our programs

New Outreach Plan and social media calendar