

**Plan for Continuing and Expanding a
Buy Local New Hampshire Agriculture Program**
2007 SCBG Program Funds

Final Report
June 29, 2010

Submitted by the
New Hampshire Department of Agriculture, Markets & Food
In cooperation with
The New Hampshire Agricultural Marketing Council

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Plan for Continuing and Expanding a Buy Local New Hampshire Agriculture Program

Issue Outline and Project Approach

There are three key issues affecting the New Hampshire agricultural industry and its ability to market itself and its products: 1) fewer people have a connection to agriculture and an understanding of where food and other products come from; 2) consumers indicate they want to buy local products, but have difficulty identifying where local goods can be purchased; and 3) there is tremendous competition to local products from other parts of the USA and the world, which compounds the confusion for the consumer over what is truly local, and negatively impacts our local economies of small business who must compete with these regional US and global businesses.

Studies have shown a desire on the part of consumers to buy local products and a positive impact on the local economy when the purchase of local products is encouraged and enabled. (NH Dept. of Agriculture, markets & Food, 2002; University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension, 2003; University of New Hampshire 2005).

A study conducted by the University of New Hampshire in 2007 found that nearly three-quarters of New Hampshire adults surveyed (73%) say it is important to them to know if farm products or processed foods available in retail stores were grown or made in NH. The vast majority of NH adults (90%) in this survey say they would be likely to buy NH farm products and processed foods if labeled as such, instead of those produced elsewhere.

The New Hampshire Dept. of Agriculture, Markets & Food received funding under the 2006 Special Crop Block Grant Program in May of 2007 to conduct a NH Buy Local New Hampshire Agriculture Program. The Dept. of Agriculture approached the NH Division of Travel & Tourism Development to enter into a partnership to conduct this program and leverage the grant funds. The division agreed and has contributed matching cash and in-kind funding. This has allowed non-specialty crop commodities to be included in the campaign. The following have been accomplished on the Buy Local New Hampshire Agriculture Program, relative to the specific stated goals:

Goals Accomplished

Goal 1.) Multi-media advertising using existing logo:



- Television advertising for promoting farm stands, farmers markets, harvest your own farms and seasonal products from June to September 2009 on WMUR TV. They were

aired from 7 am to midnight around news broadcasts and high viewer shows for maximum visibility.

- Wine & Cheese Trail publication first printed with 2006 funding (and partnership funding), was redone with a new design and expanded farm participation. It was distributed through multiple avenues, also available online.
- Internet advertising was developed and placed from July – September 2009

Goal 2.) Educational component for consumers (current and the next generation) on the benefits of local and how to purchase local

- Above advertising (Goal 1) directs consumers to website for more information on local products and how to obtain
- Seven talks to non-farm groups and the public, and one press release about available products and purchasing options, including promoting the NH Virtual Farmers Market, online shopping outlet for NH products, have been an important promotion activity to this project. Reaction to the Buy local campaign is positive, with typical comments like, “I’ve seen the ads”, or “The search tool is a great idea”. Five presentations were made to Granite State Ambassador (welcome center hosts) training sessions to approximately 35 people at each session. Additional presentations were made to a workshop group at the NH Lodging and Restaurant Association (25 people), the NH Governor’s Conference on Tourism (150 people). Most presentations included an overview of the NH agricultural industry and all included a discussion of the Buy Local Agriculture Campaign in partnership with NH Tourism.

Goal 3.) Growers’ education program on the benefits of being part of a Buy Local NH agriculture campaign and promoting under a common theme and logo.

- One news release targeted to producer publications, discussed the Buy Local Agriculture program, its activities to date and future plans. Also regular email communications with producers about participating in the Buy Local program.
- Presentations at five grower organization meetings (Christmas tree, Vegetable & Berry, NH Farm Bureau, NH Plant Growers Association, NH Winery Association) with approximately 275 attendees, total. I was invited to provide a presentation about the Buy Local campaign to the annual meetings of the NH/VT Christmas Tree Association, the NH Vegetable & Berry Growers Association, the NH Fruit Growers Association (apple growers) and the NH Plant Growers Association. This presentation is similar to what I have provided to several other agricultural organizations about this project. The Farm Bureau presentation was to the policy development committee as part of their annual meeting to propose policy for the upcoming year for their organization. The benefit to all of these presentations is that the producers are aware of the Buy Local campaign, what is being done on their behalf and what they can do as an organization and individuals to support the project. Producers are typically impressed with the scope of the project and appreciative of the efforts.

Goal 4.) Continue a mini-grant program to provide funds to eligible New Hampshire specialty crop commodity organizations to encourage the organization to tie into

the Buy Local New Hampshire Agriculture program and use the logo in their own promotion programs.

- Four groups used the funds for related projects: Maple Producers, Christmas Tree Promotion Board, Winery Association, Fruit Growers Association.

Specific Activity Accomplishments

- Buy Local NH Agriculture campaign partnership continued with the NH Division of Travel & Tourism Development to carry out the marketing plan utilizing their contracted marketing and media specialists.
- Second edition of the NH Wine and Cheese publication produced (non SCBGP funds used for the cheese component) and distributed.
- Post-program marketing survey conducted and analysis report in development
- Four projects selected for Buy Local Agriculture “mini-grant” proposals from eligible New Hampshire agricultural organizations
 - NH Fruit Growers Association—radio advertising campaign
 - NH Christmas Tree Promotion Board—website enhancement
 - NH Winery Association—Extended distribution of the NH Wine & Cheese Trails publication
 - NH Maple Producers Association—New educational exhibit at the Big E
- Five presentations before commodity organizations and at agriculture events to inform producers about the value of how of participating in a Buy Local program and how to participate
- Internet and TV advertising placed.

Measurable Outcomes Accomplished

- **20 percent increase in website visits as a result of the consumer campaign which will drive consumers to specific website(s) for information.** While we are still dealing with a change in reporting methods for the State of NH Office of Information Technology (as described in our 2006 Final Report), it looks as if we have experienced approximately a 60% increase in page views on our website from 2008 to 2009 (looking at January 1 to December 31 of both years: 18,500 in 2008 to 28,600 in 2009. The reporting period includes the months of June to September when the majority of the project activity took place and the statistics show spikes of activity on the website for that timeframe. (measured via Webtrends). Additionally, the agriculture related information on the official NH Tourism website remain popular with information about farmers’ markets, maple sugaring, Christmas trees and the Wine & Cheese trails, among the top viewed.
- **3 percent increase in number of farm job hires due to business growth/expansion.** We were unable to calculate a true measure of farm hiring change for New Hampshire, only, on an annual basis. Statistics for this trend are not available by state, but rather by region, annually. Looking at labor surveys conducted by the National Agricultural Statistics Service for the New England region, hired workers increased by 9.4% from the survey periods in April and July 2007 (69,000) to April and July of 2008 (73,000).

- **2 percent increase in awareness among consumers of the value of agriculture and its impact on their social, physical and economic environment, measured by a before and after survey.** We have conducted the “before” survey, working with statisticians at the University of New Hampshire. The “after” survey was conducted in September of 2009, as recommended by the statistical experts at UNH. We are awaiting a report of the analysis of the survey.
- **10 percent increase in awareness among producers of the value of participation in the program and use of the common logo, measured by increased membership in NH Made and use of the logo.** Membership in NH Made has increased by 162 members from December of 2008 to in December of 2009, representing an approximate 8% increase in membership. This includes 42 new members in the food and farm category.

Lessons Learned

New Hampshire’s Agricultural products, including specialty crops, are desired by consumers. Our project has helped shoppers identify NH products and studies have shown consumers will select NH products when they are known to them. This project increases public awareness of the availability of local agricultural products and will create new opportunities and new markets for NH agricultural businesses.

The Buy Local New Hampshire Agriculture Campaign has been a success on multiple levels. First it has allowed NHDAMF to establish a unique partnership with New Hampshire’s state tourism office which has continued beyond the scope of this individual project to the benefit of both agencies. Second, the marketing activities conducted in this campaign seem to have been successful in building awareness and demand for NH agricultural products. The interest in local food and agricultural products is booming. Farmers’ market numbers have increased including the establishment of a dozen winter farmers’ markets that draw shoulder to shoulder crowds. We strongly believe this project has been a major factor in building awareness of our local agricultural industry and encouraging consumers to buy local products. As an example of the project’s success, our office has been contacted by members of the local fishermen’s cooperative, seeking to participate in the promotions. Our project will continue with additional SCBG funds and we will continue to measure our impact.

Multi-State Project

New Hampshire committed some of its SCBG funds (\$5000), along with the other New England Departments of Agriculture to support and promote “Harvest New England”, an ongoing project that encourages the purchase and use of New England agricultural products by both retailers and consumers. New England is a small region with name recognition. A regional marketing effort strengthens state programs. The participating New England states are Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island. The SCBG funds were used to develop a training video on the principles of Good Agricultural Practices (GAP). We did the specific project we were going to do in our 2007 application with 2006 SCBG funds (hosted a New England-wide marketing conference). So for New Hampshire, the GAP video project is being conducted with our 2007 funding. This supports and promotes the efforts of Harvest New

England (and benefits New England Specialty Crops) as our goal indicated in the 2006 application, and as do all our joint projects. We did not specify a specific project in conjunction with Harvest New England in our 2006 SCBG application, but that we were going to support and promote the efforts of Harvest New England. The timing of the projects and funding for 2006 and 2007 overlapped so we reported on the New England Marketing conference in our 2006 report instead of 2007. Since we did not specify a specific project for 2006 funding, the GAP video is also an appropriate project for the funding.

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Appendices and Attachments

- A. Wine and Cheese Trails publication, 2nd Edition (PDF attached)
- B. Wine and Cheese Trails cover
- C. Sample internet ads
- D. Snapshot of industry information page on NH State Tourism website.
- E. Post-program survey report (PDF to be sent separately)

NEW HAMPSHIRE'S
WINE & CHEESE
TRAILS



Discover new **adventures**
with three **scenic** driving loops through
the heart of **New England**.



visitnh.gov


Appendix B: Wine & Cheese Trails Cover

Muffins, pies
or by the handful.
You pick.





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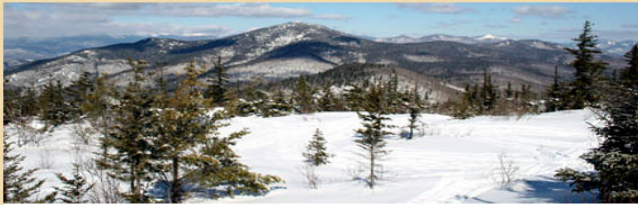


Muffins, pies
or by the handful.
You pick.



New Hampshire
You're Going To Love It Here

Appendix C: Sample internet ads



BEST TIME TO VISIT

- ▶ Classic Summer
- ▶ Harvest
- ▶ Holidays
 - ▶ Holiday Itineraries
 - ▶ Christmas Tree Farms
- ▶ Winter Activities
 - ▶ Maple Sugaring
 - ▶ Event Calendar
- ▶ New Hampshire Seasonal Videos

Christmas Tree Farms

The holiday season is special at New Hampshire Christmas tree farms where you will find a generous helping of Yankee hospitality! Special activities such as hay or sleigh rides plus treats and hot cocoa add to the seasonal festivities.

Bring some of the beauty and fragrance of New Hampshire into your home this holiday season. New Hampshire Christmas trees are available at farms where you can select and harvest your own or bring home a fresh pre-cut tree. You can also find fresh and fragrant cut trees at numerous holiday retail lots around the state. Trees can also be purchased online or via phone and shipped right to your home.

Christmas trees are grown all over New Hampshire. Most of the farms are family owned and operated and range in size from less than an acre to 100 acres in size. These New Hampshire farms grow a number of different species of Christmas trees, although Balsam fir and Fraser fir are the most numerous.

Please visit www.nhchristmastrees.com/index.php for a complete listing of Christmas tree farms throughout New Hampshire.



Book online or call (800) 653-9564 for reservations or customer support

CAR RENTALS | INNS/B&B'S

HOTELS | FLIGHT RESERVATIONS

New Hampshire Regions:

New Hampshire

Other Location:

Check In: mm/dd/yyyy

Check Out: mm/dd/yyyy

Rooms: 1

Adults: 1

Children: 0

Find Lodging in New Hampshire

Advanced Search Options >>

Appendix D: Sample information page added to the NH Tourism website featuring NH Christmas trees. In addition to this page, there is also one for apples, farmers markets, and maple. Website address is www.visitnh.gov.