Wisconsin Department of Agriculture,
Trade and Consumer Protection
2811 Agriculture Drive
Madison, WI 53708

Specialty Crop Block Grant
Final Report
Fiscal Year 2006-2007
Specialty Crop Agreement Number: 12-25-G-0602

Submitted on September 28, 2010.

Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection

Specialty Crop Block Grant FY2007- Annual Report

The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection was awarded a FY2006 & FY2007 USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant of $240,610.72. The state of Wisconsin utilized this grant to provide financial assistance to the Wisconsin Specialty Crop industry by funding proposals from eight participants listed below. DATCP used 10% of the funds to cover administrative costs for the finance department to track the funding.

Program Participants:

1) Ginseng Board of Wisconsin
2) Wisconsin Apple Grower's Association
3) Wisconsin Christmas Tree Producers Association
4) Wisconsin Cranberry Board, Inc.
5) Wisconsin Commercial Flower Grower's Association
    Project A
    Project B
6) Wisconsin Potato and Vegetable Grower's Association
7) Wisconsin Nursery Growers
8) SavorWisconsin.com – DATCP Program

I. Ginseng Board of Wisconsin

Funds Awarded*:* $2,768.00

Project Title: Promotional Video for Wisconsin Grown American Ginseng

Date of Award: 11/12/07

1) Project Background: initial purpose of the project, including the specific issue, problem, or need that was addressed by this project.

The purpose of this project was to increase awareness of the health benefits of Wisconsin grown American ginseng. Consumers, distributors, wholesalers, and retailers are not always aware of the superior quality of Wisconsin grown American ginseng. In order to educate the public, the GBW used SCBG funds to update its marketing/promotional video to inform consumers, distributors, wholesalers, and retailers about the quality of Wisconsin grown American ginseng.

2) Project Approach: brief summary of activities and tasks performed during the grant period including the work accomplished in both quantitative and qualitative terms.

Activities Performed

The Ginseng Board of Wisconsin (GBW) has finalized a promotional marketing DVD. The DVD highlights the quality of Wisconsin Ginseng, as well as the care taken by Wisconsin Ginseng growers to grow the world's finest ginseng. The video has been voiced over into the Mandarin language for use in Asia. Also, the GBW had artwork done for the cover the DVD.

Target

The DVD has already been used at trade shows in Japan and China, running continuously at the GBW trade booth. The video is being distributed throughout Asia to the main target market distributors, wholesalers, and retailers in Asia and U.S. Chinatowns. More than 500 copies were created/distributed.

Work outline

2007-08

- Hired video production company, begin filming
- Re-worked script, finished filming including harvest shots
- Hired voice over to complete video:

2008-2009

- Made copies for distribution - March 2009
- Translated videos and use voice-over for Mandarin - March 2009

3) Goals Achieved: activities that were completed in order to achieve the performance goals and measurable outcomes for the project.

Performance Goals

The GBW expects to reach the following goals with this video:

- Position Wisconsin grown American ginseng as a high quality, pure product with many health benefits.
  Status: The DVD definitely positions the industry in the correct manner, thus meeting the goal.

- Increase awareness of Wisconsin grown American ginseng raw and value added products.
  Status: The GBW will distribute approximately 500 DVDs to main target market. This will increase awareness of the product. The video was posted to YouTube and has been viewed 846 times to date.

- Differentiate Wisconsin grown American ginseng through key messaging to include:
  Value--- adds value to end products (such as beverages, health food items).
  Quality---Wisconsin grown American ginseng is pure and of the highest quality.
  Status: The language in the DVD definitely portrays these key messages.

4) Lessons Learned: insights into the lessons learned by the project staff as a result of completing this project.

This project went very smoothly due to researching and choosing a good video production company to work with and already having an old promotional video to work from. The Board put a lot of effort into picking a company with a good reputation, particularly for staying on timelines and completing projects. Too often, projects like this get stalled for various reasons and we wanted to be sure that didn't happen.

It was also helpful that we didn't have to start from scratch with the video. We had a successful video in the past so we had a good idea of what parts to keep. We also had a task group of knowledgeable, people with practical successful experience marketing ginseng to help determine what new things should be in the video so we were able to stay on track with our timeline for creating a new script and outline of what should be in it. Overall, the project was a great success and we are very happy with the results.

5) Outcome Measures: progress achieved on long-term outcome measures.

- Increase sales of Wisconsin grown American ginseng by producers.
  Status: Sales will continue to be tracked. The DVD has only recently been distributed, so sales are not yet impacted. However, the GBW expects sales to increase with its integrated marketing program, including this DVD project.
- Increase brand-awareness of Wisconsin-grown ginseng
  Status: This project impacts the entire State's specialty crop Ginseng industry. Wisconsin produces approximately 95 to 97 percent of the total United States ginseng production. Two countries, China and Canada, have caused economic problems for Wisconsin growers due to the fact that they grow ginseng that is similar in taste and look to Wisconsin grown American ginseng. However, the health benefits of Wisconsin grown American ginseng are superior to that of ginseng grown outside of the United States. Even in the United States, the average consumer does not know the difference between Asian and American (Wisconsin grown) ginseng. This project is impacting consumers, distributors, wholesalers, and retailers about the superiority of Wisconsin grown American ginseng. We are anticipating that at least 1,000 potential users of health food products will be exposed to this information because of this project. These people will then share the information continuing the branding of WI ginseng and increasing sales. We will continue to measure sales to determine how effective the video has been.

6) Additional Information: list of publications, websites, photographs that is not applicable to any of the prior sections.

The eight-minute video can be viewed in its entirety on YouTube at:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7KfIEsp7sFw&feature=related

7) Project Contact:

Butch Weege and Rachel Tate
Wisconsin Ginseng Board
555 N. 72nd Avenue, Suite 2
Wausau, WI 54401
715-845-7300
ginseng@ginsengboard.com

II. Wisconsin Apple Growers Association

Funds Awarded: $5,164.00

Project Title: Autumn Harvest Trail

Date of Award: 9/1//07

1) Project Background: initial purpose of the project, including the specific issue, problem, or need that was addressed by this project.

The purpose of this "Buy Local" initiative is to increase consumer consumption of local foods specifically related to apple growers. One of the strategies to achieve that is the development of trails which bring consumers and tourists in contact with local foods at farmers markets, restaurants, cultural events, etc. The Wisconsin Apple Growers Association will develop an "Autumn Harvest" trail or trails which will guide Wisconsin consumers and tourists to apple-related destinations in Wisconsin. These destinations will include orchards; cideries and wineries using Wisconsin apples in their production; restaurants featuring Wisconsin apples on their menus; tourist attractions with an apple feature or focus; cultural or heritage venues in which apples play a role and other destinations that we will discover during our inquiry. This project will develop a set of standards that a destination must meet to be included on the trail; it will develop branding that will give the trail destinations a distinct look in promotion and signage; it will explore the best ways of promoting the trail, (based on what similar trails in this and other states have found to be successful).

In order to increase local consumption of locally-grown apples, we will need to collaborate with other local fruit and vegetable producers. So the drive behind the project is collaboration - getting specialty crop growers to work together to promote their products to the public. The public wants and needs to know where their food comes from and they only see a small part of the picture by visiting a pumpkin farm or an apple orchard. It takes a diverse group of specialty crop growers to provide for each family's needs. The trail takes consumers on a food adventure where they learn about local foods and how those foods are produced to become a part of their diet.

2) Project Approach: brief summary of activities and tasks performed during the grant period including the work accomplished in both quantitative and qualitative terms.

Project Activity Summary: This project was being modeled after similar food and culture trails that have found popularity in other states and other countries. The trail was to provide consumers with a "local food experience" thereby increasing their consumption and knowledge about local food choices.

Identify Potential Tour Stops: We identified nearly 400 apple orchards in Wisconsin. Not all of these orchards would be potential tour stops. Some are too small, some only wholesale or sell at Farmers Markets or some would fall short of our standards for a potential tour stop. We partnered with the Wisconsin Agricultural Tourism Association and the Wisconsin Fresh Market Vegetable Growers Association to expand the trail potential. With this expansion an additional 120 possible tour stops were identified.

We also felt a "trial run" would be appropriate so we started with a Trail segment reaching from Kenosha to Madison via Milwaukee. This way we could learn more about promoting the trail and working with the different locations.

Create a Set of Standards: We wanted the Trail to be a positive experience so standards used by other entities to determine a tour stop's acceptability were reviewed and evaluated to come up with a list that we felt was appropriate for the Autumn Harvest Trail. This list of standards was used as a guide with each destination's own unique situation and experience making the final determination on if it was appropriate as a tour stop. The Site Assessment as we titled this document follows:

Autumn Harvest Trail
Site Assessment

Purpose: The purpose of creating an "Autumn Harvest Trail" is to bring consumers and tourists in contact with local foods being offered at farm markets, agritourism attractions, restaurants, cultural events, bed & breakfasts and more. Our goal is to increase the consumption of local foods by 10% for those participating on the trail. To that end, we want the attractions listed on the trail to be tourist-friendly and to satisfy the wants and needs of that clientele. Therefore, this site assessment tool was created to have a way of evaluating attractions wanting to be part of the Autumn Harvest Trail.

1. Bright, Colorful and Readable Signage
    - Signage on Approach
    - Signage at Entrance
    - Customer Directional Signs
2. On-Site Parking Areas
    - On-Road Parking
    - Limited Parking
    - Gravel Parking
    - Paved Parking
    - Bus Parking
    - Handicap Parking
3. Neat and Tidy Surroundings
    - Buildings and Grounds look inviting
    - Landscaping and Outdoor displays are attractive
    - Property Clean and Litter Free
    - Trash and Recycling Receptacles Handy
4. Clean and Convenient Restrooms
    - Port-A- Potties

- Single indoor restroom
- Multiple Restrooms
- Neat, Clean and Well Supplied
- Handicap Accessible

5. Drinking Water Available
   - Free Access to Drinking Water
   - Drinking Fountain
   - Bottled Water for Sale
6. Local Produce/Bakery/Other for Sale/Available
   - Produce grown at Farm for Sale
   - Produce grown by Neighboring Farms for Sale
   - Bakery/Other made on Site Food Items for Sale:_____
7. Store with Variety of Items for Sale
   - Local Crafts/Art/Gifts for Sale
   - Food Items for Sale, Prepackaged
8. Entertainment or Educational Activity
   - Entertainment Available on Site: _____
   - Educational Programs Offered: _____
9. Information on other places to visit in area
   - Brochure Rack
   - Posters
   - Community Bulletin Board
10. A Place to Eat on Site or Close by
    - Restaurant on Site utilizing food grown on site
    - Restaurant within 5 miles offering local foods
    - Restaurant within 10 miles offering local foods

Develop a Brand: We hired Flimsy Box Design to develop four different logos for the Autumn Harvest Trail. These logos were then distributed to the Board of Directors of all three participating groups to get their input as to which logo could be used as a "brand" for the Autumn Harvest Trail. Based on their evaluations, the Autumn Harvest Trail logo was selected and used as the basis for creating the brand which was used on the brochure, signage, website, etc. Copies of those initial designs and the final selection are included as addendums as part of this report.

Create a Promotion Strategy: Our promotion strategy was worked out with the tour destinations. We decided to do a drawing at each location for a prize donated by that location and to also put all drawing slips into a drawing for a grand prize. We would promote the trail with a brochure that would be promoted through website pages attached to the current association sponsors websites; through press releases and through media interviews. Consumers could request brochures that would be sent to them free of charge.

Identify Potential Funding Sources to Promote & Sustain the Trail(s): We applied for and received a "Buy Local/Buy Wisconsin" grant to test the popularity of a trail and our publicity efforts. Once this segment of the trail is evaluated after this fall's tourism season, we'll know

what the costs of a trail are and can then determine what the annual investment in promoting the trail would be.

Summary:
The Autumn Harvest Trail Southern Gateways segment is up and functioning this fall. We have 18 destinations that are taking part in the trail. You can check out the web pages for the trail by accessing www.waga.org; www.wisconsinfreshproduce.org or www.visitdairyland.com and clicking on the Autumn Harvest Trail logo.

We had originally planned to have at least 25 trail destinations but due to the timing of launched, we chose to utilize only 18 locations for the trail. The Specialty Crops Grant provided the planning and the ground work for the Autumn Harvest Trail. We then had to seek additional funding to actually implement the Trail. We did receive funding from a Buy Local/Buy Wisconsin grant but not until the middle of July 2008. It was important for the momentum of the project to be implemented by the fall of 2008 or by September 1st. Therefore, we had about six weeks to finalize destinations, develop webpages, develop a brochure, implement drawing, etc. We could have obtained 25 destinations if there had been more time between funding and the implementation. With the short timeline, we had to go with the 18 destinations. It's a busy time for growers in July and August and to get them to respond so we could implement by September 1st was difficult.

Even with 18 destinations, the trail has resulted in success. We are currently collecting and analyzing results of the trail. To date we have the following data:

- A minimum of 1,245 adults (18 or older) visited the 18 destinations for the first time during the project period of 9/1/08 – 11/30/08.
- We also had 2,460 visitors to the brand new Autumn Harvest Trail website pages during the project period with 1,352 unique visitors.
- Increased sales will be reported shortly

3) Goals Achieved: activities that were completed in order to achieve the performance goals and measurable outcomes for the project.

WAGA will work closely with DATCP's Buy Local team to:

- Identify potential tour destinations
- Determine a set of standards by which tour destinations would be qualified for inclusion
- Develop a "brand" that would be used to distinguish the trail in promotion materials, signage, etc.
- Create a promotion strategy
- Identify potential funding sources to promote and sustain the trail(s).

All activities related to the goals were achieved and a final trail with 18 destinations was created. The trail is successfully being promoted by the Wisconsin Apple Growers Association, the Wisconsin Agricultural Tourism Association and the Wisconsin Fresh

Market Vegetable Growers Association. (See section 2 for more detail on goals and activities completed under each. See section 5 for measured outcomes of these goals.)

4) Lessons Learned: insights into the lessons learned by the project staff as a result of completing this project.

As we looked at creating a food and culture trail, it became obvious that the trail would need to be more diverse than just apple orchards. We would need to have a variety of local food destinations to encourage consumers to "travel" to more than one stop. Therefore, WAGA partnered with the Wisconsin Agricultural Tourism Association and the Wisconsin Fresh Market Vegetable Growers Association to expand the trail potential.

We tried some radio advertising to direct consumers to the Autumn Harvest Trail website through the Wisconsin Apple Growers website. During the promotion that was run during drive time just prior to the weekend, we saw a spike in the hits to the website. The next time we ran radio spots the station encouraged us to run during the daytime as their demographics indicated that would be a good time to hit our target of families. It didn't work…we did not see the rise in hits on the website as we had seen when we advertised during drive time.

We accomplished and exceeded our goals, but believe there's more that could be done to develop a more cooperative relationship between the destinations in the trail. It would take holding some meetings and trying to brainstorm ways in which the businesses involved could "share" customers, resources, etc.

5) Outcome Measures: progress achieved on long-term outcome measures.

The long-term outcome of this project was to increase consumer consumption of local foods, and to increase agri-tourism in general. This outcome was measured in website hits and % sales by the businesses participating in the trail. Both of these assessments took place during the year after the Specialty Crop Block Grant was completed. During the promotion, these brand new website pages had 2,460 page views with 1,352 unique viewers. Approximately 32% of viewers to the hosting websites clicked through to the Autumn Harvest Trail web pages. (Based on data from the Wisconsin Apple Growers website.)

To track consumers, a drawing was held for adults only. Each destination donated a prize to one person entered in the drawing at their location. Then all drawing slips were turned in for a grand prize which was a weekend at the Chula Vista Resort (donated by Chula Vista). We do not know what percentage of destination visitors entered the drawing but we did have 4,526 drawing entries. 28% or 1,246 individuals indicated that this was their first visit to this destination; 21% or

914 indicated this was their 2-3 visit; while 43% indicated they came to this destination every year; the remainder did not respond to this question.

Overall, with 15 businesses reporting, sales for the period from 9/1/08 – 11/30/08 increased over sales from 9/1/07 – 11/30/07 by $401,928. The Autumn Harvest Trail does not take credit solely for this increase. The personal efforts of the businesses involved and other factors all shared a role in this success. We had initially hoped that the Autumn Harvest Trail would make a cumulative impact of $50,500 that was greatly exceeded to our excitement!

In Increasing consumer traffic at agricultural related tourism destinations and activities, as stated above, we identified 1,246 adult consumers who visited one of these destinations for the first time because of our advertising. Our goal was to attract 500 family units so even if we divide this number by 2 we exceeded our goal by 20%.

6) Additional Information: **list of publications, websites, photographs that is not applicable to any of the prior sections.**

View trail info at http://www.waga.org/AHT/autumn_harvest_trail.htm

7) Project Contact:

Anna Maenner, Executive Director
211 Canal Road
Waterloo, WI 53594
920-478-4277
acminc@verizon.net

III. Wisconsin Cranberry Board, Inc.

Funds Awarded: $33,864.00

Project Title: Wisconsin Cranberry Education and Promotion Project

Date of Award: 10/1//07

1) Project Background: initial purpose of the project, including the specific issue, problem, or need that was addressed by this project.

Cranberries are the state's largest fruit crop and Wisconsin leads the nation, producing more fruit than all other state's combined in 2006. The vast majority of the state's cranberry crop is sold to a national producer. To keep prices competitive for growers and increase local markets for cranberry consumption, this project will have 3 components designed to provide consumers with information on how cranberries are grown, their economic importance to the state, the health benefits of cranberry consumption and to demonstrate versatile ways to incorporate a wide variety of cranberries in their diet. An additional component of the project will help increase production by providing growers with up to date information for management of critical weed problems. There are about 250 cranberry farmers in the state that operate about 275 cranberry farms. The weed management materials will be provided to all of the properties and key decision makers as well as crop consultants, UW Extension personnel and providers of other technical crop services as an important step in educating producers so their production is improved.

2) Project Approach: brief summary of activities and tasks performed during the grant period including the work accomplished in both quantitative and qualitative terms.

Project Summary - The project consists of four components.

1. The first is production of an educational video presentation on the state's cranberry industry targeting members of the general public, tour groups, and attendees at state fair, fall harvest festivals and other public events. This project has been completed and a final report was submitted to the DATCP in October 2008.

2. The second is the printing and distribution of a weed management guide that is in development stages at the UW Madison. This project has been completed. A final report and invoice were presented to DATCP in December 2009 so all funds were spent by 12/31/09 (grant termination was 6/30/10).

3. The third is development and printing of new brochures on cranberries including general information as well as recipes for their use. This project has been completed and a final report was submitted to DATCP in October 2008.
4. The final component is to provide partial funding for the enhancement of displays in the Exhibit Hall at the Wisconsin Cranberry Discovery Center in Warrens, WI. This is the final report with an invoice to be presented to DATCP in June 2010.

Work Plan

Project	Activity	Responsible Party	Timeframe
Videotape Production	Review existing videotape, available b roll footage, rewrite and update script, final approval and production.	WCB will contract with the WSCGA to work with a production company to complete project.	Start: Oct. 2007 End: Oct: 2008 Completed
New brochure development and printing	Review existing brochures, identify needs, collect recipes from a variety of sources, write and edit copy, submit to printers for formatting and final production.	WCB will contract with WSCGA to develop the materials. The WSCGA Education and Public Relations Committees will oversee project. A private consultant may be retained to assist in the design and copy writing.	Start: Jan. 2008 End: Aug. 2008 Completed
Weed Management and Identification Guide	Pictures of cranberry weeds and drawings will be collected, copy will be written and the completed formatted guide will be printed after receiving competitive bids.	UW Madison faculty will compile the pictures, drawings and copy. WCB will contract for the printing and provide distribution. The grant will cover only the printing and distribution. WCB has provided $10,750 for development of the guide.	Start: Nov. 2008 End: April 2009 Completed
Display Enhancement at Wisconsin Cranberry Discovery Center	Develop design and cost budget for the exhibit, conduct fundraising activities to secure adequate funding for completion of project.	The Cranberry Museum, Inc. will conduct the activity under contract with WCB. Private vendor will be used to design and build exhibit.	Start: May 2009 End: June 2010 Completed

Activities to Date

1. *Videotape Production* – Funding for the project was approved by the Wisconsin Cranberry Board, Inc. at its annual meeting on December 4, 2007. The project was completed by the Wisconsin State Cranberry Growers Association. A subcommittee from the grower organization was selected to review the current video and to make recommendations for changes and oversee the project.

The group began meeting with Zeppos and Associates to review and update the videotape production "Wisconsin Cranberries – Growing Strong". Drafts of scripts were evaluated in the spring of 2008 with final edits completed by June 2008. The process included the identification of new portions of video to be shot or used from existing footage contained in the WSCGA digital library.

The project was completed in July 2008 and the video was utilized as part of the industry booth at the Wisconsin State Fair in August 2008 and has been used in subsequent years as well. It has been posted on the industry website at www.wiscran.org. The video was also used for tours at the fall 2008 Warrens and Eagle River Cranberry festivals and is shown to visitors at the Wisconsin Cranberry Discovery Center in Warrens, WI.

200 copies of the video in DVD form have been purchased. Distribution of these began in October, 2008. They are being made available to all growers and interested members of the public free of charge while the supply lasts. All funds for the project have been expended.

2. *New Brochure* - Funding for the project was approved by the Wisconsin Cranberry Board, Inc. at its annual meeting on December 4, 2007. The project was completed by the Wisconsin State Cranberry Growers Association. A subcommittee from the grower organization was selected to work on the project.

   The grower committee met and reviewed a number of recipes. 18 were selected for inclusion in the brochure. Permission to use them was obtained and all recipes were reviewed and sampled by the committee. A revised copy was developed which included information on cranberry growing, health benefits and helpful hints.

   Fey Publishing of Wisconsin Rapids provided the design and layout as well as printing 15,000 copies. Distribution began at the Wisconsin State Fair in August 2008. The brochure was posted to the industry website and additional distribution has taken place at various fall cranberry harvest festivals. All funds have been expended.

3. *Weed Management and Identification Guide* – The grant was used to pay the costs for printing and distributing the guide when completed. WCB provided funding to UW Madison Faculty to collect samples and photographs of cranberry weeds during the 2007 and 2008 growing seasons. Funding for field work was approved by WCB in 2007. A botany student was hired to identify samples collected, catalog them and write descriptions. After the 2008 growing season the final writing and design was completed. The WCB made arrangements for printing and distribution through Park Printing House in Verona and distribution through WSCGA and Opportunity Development Center in Wisconsin Rapids.

   The book was finalized for printing in August of 2009 with printing and distribution in October/November 2009.

   Problems arose with the binding after distribution of two copies per marsh was made in November, 2009. The printer has reprinted and bound the book for delivery in December, 2009. At that time two copies of the newly bound book will be sent to all cranberry marshes in the state. Additional distributions will take place throughout the rest of the year. No additional costs will be incurred as a result of the faulty binding. The printer has taken responsibility for the flaw.

However WCB will incur costs as requests for additional copies are received. A charge will be made to recover those costs (no grant funds will be used for these copies).

4. *Display Enhancement at Wisconsin Cranberry Discovery Center* - The display portion of the project enhanced and updated the display to provide consumers with information on the state's largest fruit crop, how cranberries are grown, and their economic importance to the state.

   The Discovery Center is located in the Village of Warrens, Wisconsin, the self proclaimed "Cranberry Capitol of Wisconsin". The facility includes a Bakery, Taste Test Kitchen Gift, Shop, Library and Exhibit Hall. The Exhibit Hall tells the story of the state's cranberry industry. The exhibits feature both the historical as well as contemporary aspects of the state's largest fruit crop.

   This project updated an exhibit in the lower level of the center to provide updated information on use of irrigation by cranberry growers for frost protection, winter flooding, harvest flooding and pest control. The display added new technologies developed over the years since the opening of the center in 2004.

   The project built on previous Specialty Crop Block Grant funds. A large portion of the funding for the Discovery Center was through the initial block grant of $516,000. These funds were used for a portion of the remodeling costs of the historic building and the development, construction and creation of the exhibit hall.

   The CMI conducted a fundraiser with a goal of $15,000 to update the exhibit. The goal was achieved in December 2009. DATCP provided an extension on use of the funds through June, 2010. When the funding goal was achieved the CMI Board of Directors appointed a committee to review the current display and develop content for the new one. The committee recommended the hiring of VEE Incorporated to design and build the new exhibit. A contract was approved for VEE to complete the work in December of 2009.

   The display committee began working with designers from VEE to develop an initial design and refined budget for the project. This work was completed in January, 2010.

   At the same time the Board of Directors and staff continued to solicit additional cash and in kind donations for the exhibit. Irrigation equipment such as high efficiency sprinklers and soil moisture probes were provided by local irrigation companies. An area grower agreed to allow access to their weather station to be displayed on a monitor. The same grower agreed to and assisted with the installation of a web cam on the marsh to provide real time video of activity on a cranberry bed.

   Based on the copy and materials provided, VEE began the production and design for the display. A final layout for the new exhibit in the space was completed in April, 2010. The design incorporated existing components along with new panels and displays. Because of difficulties in finalizing the copy and content the project completion date was delayed for two months with a target opening date of July 1, 2010.

Construction and building of the new displays began in late April and May. Initial installation was made in May of 2010. Problems with the floor paint delayed the opening of the exhibit until July, 2010. However all aspects have been completed and costs of the project final. All SCBG funds were spent on direct costs to upgrade and update the Cranberry Discovery Museum displays. No funds were spent on fund raising. Any additional funds for the project were provided by the cranberry museum.

3) Goals Achieved: activities that were completed in order to achieve the performance goals and measurable outcomes for the project.

1. The video has been in distribution since summer of 2008. We believe it has achieved its goal of helping to educate the general public about the health benefits and versatility of cranberries as a healthy food. It has also helped Wisconsinites realize the economic importance of cranberries to the state economy. 200 copies of the video were originally produced and have been distributed to growers, processors and consumers. The video is also posted on the website receiving numerous downloads daily. We estimate 90% of visitors to the Discovery Center watch the video as part of their visit. We believe the video has been highly successful in educating the public about Wisconsin cranberries.

2. The cranberry brochure has also been highly successful in educating the public. Because its main focus is cranberry recipes, it appeals to a segment of the population that is slightly different from the video. Although the brochure is small, it contains more than 20 recipes plus additional preparation tips and quick food ideas. The brochure has generated lots of requests for more brochures and drives people to the website. Because it appeals to people who like to cook and are health-conscious, it seems to have done a great job of spurring word of mouth marketing for cranberries. We have distributed all 15,000 brochures that were originally printed and several thousand of the additional 12,000 we had reprinted in 2009.

3. The *Weeds of the Cranberry Marsh* guide turned out extremely well. Two copies were given to each grower in the state. The guide is easy to use with simple explanations and excellent color photographs. Growers have commented on its benefit and we feel this project was well worth the cost.

4. The new exhibit has been completed. Our objective was to provide visitors to the Discovery Center with a quality experience of the historical and contemporary aspects of cranberry production in Wisconsin. The new exhibit details historical water use through today's modern practices that utilize the latest in technology to make decisions that provide support for the crop and conserve resources. Two video monitors display a live web cam, real time weather and soil moisture data from an area cranberry farm.

   Our actual goals were to complete the project according to shorter time frame. We were delayed in meeting that timeline but the project was completed to meet our overall goal to update the exhibit to include the newest technologies for water management on cranberry farms.

4) Lessons Learned: **insights into the lessons learned by the project staff as a result of completing this project.**

From the project, the biggest lesson learned was to not be too aggressive in developing a timetable for a project of this magnitude. We also learned to include in the budget contingencies for unforeseen problems. For example in the installation process some damage was done to the paint on the floor in the exhibit hall. Additional costs were incurred to repair the damage from the unforeseen problem.

5) Outcome Measures: **progress achieved on long-term outcome measures.**

The two main outcomes of this project were to increase public awareness of cranberry production practices, economic importance to the state, and health benefits of cranberry consumption and to increase production by providing growers with up to date information for management of critical weed problems. All 500 videos were distributed to producers, processors, and educators throughout the state. Thousands of visitors have watched the video at the Cranberry Discovery Center or on the WI Cranberry Growers Association Website. More than 15,000 Cranberry recipe brochures were distributed with many requests for them (no way to account for this number). While the displays for the Discovery Museum have just been completed, we anticipate thousands of viewers to the museum annually including school children who may visit as part of their school curriculum. The WI Cranberry Board also has an FY08 Farm Bill Specialty Crop Block Grant to create school curriculum so we believe this outcome will be enhanced by the completion of that grant and tie in extremely well with our newly completed displays.

Over 500 copies of the *Weeds of the Cranberry Marsh* book have been distributed to WI producers. Producers in other states may also benefit from this project as most of the noxious plants are common to all cranberry producing states. The book was created in a way that is user friendly without need of scientific experience to identify weeds. While we do not have actual numbers, we have received positive feedback from cranberry growers on the usefulness of this publication.

Thousands of individuals and all of the state's 250 cranberry producers have been positively impacted by the 2007 Specialty Crop Block Grant.

6) Additional Information: list of publications, websites, photographs that is not applicable to any of the prior sections.

Cranberry Video: *Wisconsin Cranberries: Growing Strong* can be viewed at http://www.wiscran.org/about_cranberries_0002/Videos_0027.html

Year 'Round Cranberry Recipes brochure can be obtained at: http://www.wiscran.org/user_image/pdf_files/RecipeBrochure8-08.pdf

Weeds of the Cranberry Marsh guide is available at www.wiscran.org and through the University of Wisconsin library system.

7) Project Contact:

Tom Lochner, Executive Director
Wisconsin Cranberry Board, Inc.
PO Box 1351
132 East Grand Avenue, Suite 202
Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494
715-423-2070
Tom.Lochner@wiscran.org

IV. Wisconsin Christmas Tree Producers Association

Funds Awarded: $6243.00

Project Title: Promotion of real Wisconsin Christmas trees and education of consumers about the benefits of real Christmas trees

Date of Award: 11/12//07

1) Project Background: initial purpose of the project, including the specific issue, problem, or need that was addressed by this project.

The Christmas tree industry in Wisconsin has an economic impact of 50 million dollars. However the market share of the REAL Christmas tree has been declining due to pressures from the artificial Christmas tree industry and a loss of traditional holiday celebrations. For this reason, we, as a green industry, need to promote Real Trees and educate the public about the positive effects and great traditions that Christmas trees provide at the holiday season. Direct consumer contact during promotional and educational events will allow us to do that. New materials need to be developed which will educate the consumer about the benefits of Real Trees and increase their desire for a REAL Christmas tree.

For years the Wisconsin Christmas tree industry has been struggling to keep pace with the increased competition from the artificial Christmas tree industry. Since the introduction of the artificial Christmas tree, many growers have been forced out of business. From early 1990 to 2006, the Real Christmas tree market share has dropped from 38% to 25%. Besides the artificial industry gaining that market share, another 26% of households have no Christmas tree. Our industry is truly being threatened by overseas competition, with most artificial Christmas trees coming from China.

If the family Christmas tree farm is to survive we need to work on retaining the customers that we already have and find ways to attract new customers. Generation Y is the largest generation since the baby boomers and they are now market influencers. Reaching them now is essential to our industry's future. We need to increase grower awareness on how to market to this generation. Gen Y is made up of 80 million people from ages 12-29. About half of them are still under 20 years old and they are purchasing Real Trees at a rate of 38%. Since this is a new generation, ensuring they begin their lives with the tradition of a Real Tree will be much easier for the industry than changing their minds later.

Children impact the parent's decision to buy a Real Tree. Harris Interactive research shows that having a child at home increases the likelihood of having a tree in the home. Our challenge is to be sure it is a Real Tree. We need to inform and educate the public about the benefits that REAL Christmas trees have over artificial trees and why Real Trees are better for the environment. We want them to buy from local growers, which will boost the local economy and help the environment, keeping fake trees out of landfills and trees growing on

large acreage plots rather than being sold to developers. The future of our industry depends upon our success in effectively marketing our products to future generations of consumers and changing any negative attitudes that may exist towards REAL Christmas trees.

2) Project Approach: brief summary of activities and tasks performed during the grant period including the work accomplished in both quantitative and qualitative terms.

Children's Activity Book:

We revised the "Christmas Tree Activity Book for Children" and printed 3,000 copies. The cost of these was less than what we budgeted, so then we developed a separate "Real Trees Recycle" activity book for elementary aged children and printed 5,000 copies to utilize the balance of budget item. The books are unique and complement each other. We anticipate that these books will help young children and their parents understand that a real tree is a good choice for a Christmas tree and also good for the environment. For the recycle book, we approached a number of people who we hoped would be able to create some coloring book pages for us. It took longer than we expected to find someone to commit to it. Finally, we found an artist who was willing and he designed some coloring pages which depicted benefits of real trees and recycling ideas. Then we included information and an activity on the environmental benefits of real trees which was developed by Ag in the Classroom. We included an introductory page that told about tree farming in general, and a worksheet for students. A list of web sites gives the reader a place to find more information and teaching resources.

The books are being distributed this summer at teacher in-service days, the Dane County Fair, the State Fair and Farm Technology Days youth tent. We will have information available on our website for teachers/parents to request copies. Copies will also be given to Ag in the Classroom and Alice in Dairy land for their distribution. Members will take some to their local schools. At this time, we are compiling a list of groups/schools that we will notify and send copies to if they are interested in receiving them.

In Kind: Design and updates of books by C Nicholson and B Irvin, 32 hrs @ 15.00 = $480. Mileage 150 miles @ .555=$83.25. Phone. Envelopes, boxes, labor, & postage for mailing books.

Educational Display Development:

We developed a video of Christmas tree production which depicted the many aspects of farming. Both photographs and video were used in the production and a recitation told the story, along with the captioning on the screen so it can be shown without the sound. The video was shown continually during the State Fair in August 2008. The fair attendees were very interested in it and took time to watch it. They especially liked to watch the section on shearing trees with knives. At our member meeting in August (2008), we showed the video to the membership and asked for their ideas for improvements. We have modified parts of the video since then. It will continue to be used for promotion and education of the public each year.

Two maps were developed and the member's Christmas tree farms were indicated by a pin/sticker. This allowed consumers to find a farm near their home by referencing the number with a list of members. The maps were displayed at Farm Technology Days and the State Fair. They will be updated each year to include current members. The consumers were interested in viewing the map and were educated on where Christmas tree farms are located.

During Farm Technology Days, a coloring book, "Real Trees Recycle" was provided for the kids to take with them. Ink pads and stamps were available for kids to make a picture, along with three secret boxes where a person could feel what was in the box and guess what it was. This created interaction between the Christmas tree grower in the booth and the consumer. One box contained a plastic branch and another a real tree branch- the consumer was told to smell his fingers after feeling the item, noting how the real tree had a nice aroma. This was done to make the consumer aware of the aesthetic benefits of real trees. A number of signs were hung on a real Christmas tree noting the reasons a real tree is good for the environment, and the booth volunteers were able to reinforce that message while talking with consumers. We gave away tree farming posters and magnets.

Website Updates:
Wording has been added to the website www.christmastrees-wi.org to increase the awareness of the environmental benefits of real trees.

Seminars:
In January 2009 we held a winter convention at the Glacier Canyon Lodge in Wisconsin Dells. We had two seminars: in the first one we addressed marketing to Gen Y consumers. There were 143 people in attendance; and in the second we addressed how to get the environmental message to the media and consumers. There were 108 people in attendance.

Rick Dungey, Public Relations Manager for NCTA spoke on "Real World Ways to Reach Gen Y". His presentation tackled the issue of those millions of 13- to 31-year-olds who own a huge portion of the consumer market and how important it is for the Real Tree industry to capture their segment. Growers learned the importance of targeting them, and what they need to do to successfully reach these Gen Yers. His session laid out different ways to get the Real tree message to Gen Y. Dungey walked the growers through the new technology and online social networks available, showing them how to get their name out there on sites like Myspace, YouTube and Wikipedia. They also learned where to find the Real Trees for Kids online curriculum. They walked out of the session ready to tackle the new wonders of the internet.

In the second seminar, Dungey talked about how the growers can combat negative media and get positive stories in the media to help market their farm. He showed them where to find media contact information online and discussed which person they should be contacting depending on what information they want to get out. He encouraged them to use the resources that the National Christmas Tree Association makes available for them, and to look at other Christmas tree farm web sites for ideas.

In-Kind: Promotion of these seminars was done in our Quarterly Journal and on our website, along with being included in the convention program that was mailed to all members. The journals and convention program were published and mailed. The venue rental, speaker meals and room were supplied by the association.

Educational Posters:
Pictures were taken by different growers of the different aspects of Christmas tree production. The photos were reviewed and the best ones were printed as a vinyl sticker and put on weather proof foam board. The foam boards will attach to a poster stand or easel and be set throughout the display. The pictures, along with short captions, depict the tree farming story. They are used at public events such as county fairs and Farm Technology Days to get the attention of the consumer.

In Kind: Taking photos, downloading, scanning, reviewing them, consulting with designer, 50 hrs @ 15 = $750. Mileage, phone, e-mails, supplies.

Environmental Benefits of Christmas Trees brochure:
We developed and printed the brochure, "Go Green, buy a real tree". The brochure laid out a chart showing the facts of real trees vs. artificial trees in the areas of: method of production, components, PVC and lead free indication, chemicals, disposal, renewable resource, eco-friendly indication. The chart clearly showed the evidence that the real tree is better for the environment. The brochure also gave some tips on selecting a real tree and told them to look on our website for a farm. These have already been distributed at the Dane County fair and Farm Technology Days and will continue to be distributed at public events. We were able to print 6,000 because the posters were cheaper than expected so there were funds still available.

In Kind: Consulting with designer, review by board, 10 hrs @ 15 = $150, Postage & supplies to mail out, phone, emails.

Curriculum brochure:
We developed a bookmark highlighting the "Real trees 4 kids" online curriculum. The bookmark seemed to be a logical choice instead of a brochure and we were able to print more copies. We will distribute these to school teachers along with the activity books. We will also use other organizations to distribute them, such as Wisconsin Agribusiness Council, Alice in Dairy land, and Ag in the Classroom. We also have them available at the public events with a sign letting teachers know we have resources for them.

In Kind: Design of bookmark, 14 hours @ 15 = $210, Mileage, phone, emails, photos.

Summary:
We are very grateful to receive the grant funds to do these projects. These resources will be useful in helping us tell the public about the real Christmas tree and we hope to dispel myths and lies about real trees. Thank you for the funds.

3) Goals Achieved: activities that were completed in order to achieve the performance goals and measurable outcomes for the project.

1. Develop a brochure describing the environmental benefits of Real Trees and how they can be recycled.

   Brochure was create, 6000 were printed. Distribution at county/state fairs and other appropriate functions has been and is currently taking place. Reaction to the information seems positive.

2. Promote the Wisconsin Christmas tree industry and REAL Christmas trees at the Wisconsin State Fair and Farm Technology Days with a display and interaction with attendees.

   Educational displays including the new video, two different coloring books, maps of tree farms throughout the state, and the brochure were distributed at Farm Technology Days, Dane County Fair and the Wisconsin State fair in 2010. Interactive educational activities were also presented for children not only to engage them but to give their parents time and reason to watch the video and read the display information while kids were engaged in activities. This strategy was extremely effective.

3. Distribute educational and/or promotional materials

   School curriculum was created and marketed to elementary schools in the state and given to teachers directly. We partnered with several other organizations to distribute information about the curriculum. Distribution is going well. The materials created seem to be perfect for catching the interest of educators.

4. Educate the growers on how to market to Gen Y consumers

   We held a workshop with a guest speaker who was able to provide effective strategies for reaching Generation Y. It was presented on a level the impacted growers and gave them the tools so each individual grower could do some of their own marketing as well as helping the industry's effort to direct Generation Y to local tree growers. Everyone was quite pleased with the choice in presenter and the materials covered in the workshop.

5. Educate the growers on how to get the environmental message to the media and the public.

   Another very effective seminar was held to help growers get positive stories to the media about real Christmas trees. Growers were given other tools and suggestions for marketing their product to the public and using environmental positioning of benefits of real trees to help promote their businesses. These concepts and practical ways to market were very beneficial for the growers.

4) Lessons Learned: insights into the lessons learned by the project staff as a result of completing this project.

Children's Activity Book:
For the recycle book, we approached a number of people who we hoped would be able to create some coloring book pages for us. It took longer than we expected to find someone to commit to it. Finally, we found an artist who was willing and he volunteered his time and designed some coloring pages which depicted benefits of real trees and recycling ideas. The end products were somewhat different, but improved on, from what we envisioned. The big take-aways from this are that it can be very difficult to communicate your vision to someone else, finding business partners you can connect with isn't always easy but frequently makes your end result closer to what you wanted in the first place, compromise is essential in keeping projects on track, and working with others frequently brings new ideas that can change/improve your vision even if you end up with something different than you thought you wanted.

Educational Display Development:
When looking for photos or video to use in the video, we had a difficult time locating good photos. Snapshots weren't as good as we wanted when scrutinized to use in a production. We did the best we could with the funds and volunteers available. Getting the final display products to one central location or to the person in charge of the booth took some coordination and incurred some costs. When a variety of tree growers brainstormed together we had a lot of great ideas and developed some great resources and displays. We will working on posting the video to our website but have not found someone to do it free of charge and funds were not set aside for this purpose. (www.christmastrees-wi.org)

Educational posters: After the posters were designed, we had to sit down with the poster designer to re-do it. The original designs they made weren't what we wanted – a lack of communication. After the final posters were printed, the quality wasn't as good as expected, possibly due to the inexperience or lack of knowledge of the designer using the computer programs or the process used in printing them.

Environmental benefits of Christmas trees brochure: After printing the brochure, we found a typographical error. It was hard to work long distance with a graphics artist, because looking at the project on a computer screen is different than a printed copy. The choice of colors and text on the front were disappointing in the final copy.

Curriculum brochure: No problems with this design; we used a local designer and printing company and could deal with them face to face. This worked a lot better! Even with today's technology, working with local businesses when making any kind of printed materials seems to be the best option for end results you want.

5) Outcome Measures: **progress achieved on long-term outcome measures.**

The main outcome of this project was to increase public awareness of the environmental benefits of purchasing real Christmas trees. The response of the public to the materials created has been very positive. This funding was extremely beneficial to our industry. We will continue to use these promotional materials for several years and are confident they will make significant impact on increasing sales of Christmas trees. Specific outcomes include:

1. Interacted with thousands of attendees at Farm Technology Days and the State Fair. The new promotional materials have been extremely well received and are effectively educating the public on the environmental impact and benefit to purchasing real Christmas trees.

2. Distributed over 1,000 Activity Books to children and 100 poster sets and curriculum resources to parents and teachers since their completion. Evaluation forms are sent along with the books so that we can get feedback from the teachers. This has just begun so we have not received enough feedback yet to provide any specific statistics.

3. Provided more than 100 Activity Books, Curriculum Brochures, and Poster sets to the Farm Bureau Federation's Ag in the Classroom projects.

4. Increased Sales – will be measured on a national level by a survey done by Harris Interactive. An increased demand will be measured at the local level by increased sales at the local retail Christmas tree lot or Choose and Cut Farm. Sales of Christmas trees at the wholesale level may increase with a rising demand from retailers. Since we just completed the materials in winter of 2009, we have not had a chance to measure effectiveness of the materials through sales but these will be monitored over the next few years to see if our efforts have yielded higher sales.

5. Attitudes of consumers will also be measured by their increased desire to purchase a REAL Christmas tree. While it is difficult to accurately quantify the change in positive attitudes towards Christmas trees, we would expect to see an increased demand for Real Trees in the future.

6) Additional Information: **list of publications, websites, photographs that is not applicable to any of the prior sections.**

Links to request the educational materials/coloring books created for the grant:
http://www.christmastrees-wi.org/teacher.html

7) Project Contact:

Cheryl Nicholson, Executive Secretary
Wisconsin Christmas Tree Producers Association Inc
W9833 Hogan Road
Portage, WI 53901
608-742-8663
wctpa@dwave.net

V. Commercial Flowers Growers of Wisconsin – Project A

Funds Awarded: $16,192.00

Project Title: Website Development and Specialty Cut Flower Program

Date of Award: 10/1//07

1) Project Background: initial purpose of the project, including the specific issue, problem, or need that was addressed by this project.

The main purposes of this project are to provide an educational outsource for growers in Wisconsin and to show the feasibility and benefits of growing new cut flowers to encourage specialty and green growers to incorporate new crops and methods into this commodity. In order to continue the growth this industry has experienced in recent years, the industry must be proactive in developing and conducting marketing efforts to increase market share. A new web-site to list the new crops: cut flowers, vegetables, bedding plants, and perennials trialed by Wisconsin's Agricultural Research Stations is needed.

Each year the station trials over 400 new selections of flowers, vegetables and fruits. Existing and new specialty crop growers/green industry in Wisconsin could access a new web-site for education that would be tied to the cut flower trials. Growers will receive new updates on cut flower research, new and innovative vegetables, and new bedding plant evaluations. The Agricultural Research Stations across the state test/evaluate new varieties of numerous crops. These include, but are not limited to: cut flowers, table grapes, vegetables, annual flowers, perennial flowers, and fruits.

It is estimated that the number of specialty crop growers that will use the web-site could be as many as 1,500. Through web-site education, farmers will be exposed to information on how to grow crops, what crops are popular, new fruits, vegetables and cut flowers coming on the market early in the breeding program cycle.

Consumers and Master Gardeners of Wisconsin may also access this web-site to find evaluation data on new vegetables, cut flowers and bedding plants. Master Gardeners work to educate the populace of Wisconsin on new release of plant selections, diseases and insect problems. An easily accessible web site would prove invaluable to these plant ambassadors.

2) Project Approach: brief summary of activities and tasks performed during the grant period including the work accomplished in both quantitative and qualitative terms.

The project had a dual focus. We proposed development of a web-site that would provide an educational outsource for growers in Wisconsin. This web-site would be part of the program

developed by the University of WI – Madison West Madison Agricultural Research Station and features pages promoting field days, bedding plants, cut flowers and vegetable varietal trial evaluation results. Other program evaluation and research project results conducted at West Madison will also be featured on the web pages.

The second focus was to show the feasibility and benefits of growing new cut flowers in Wisconsin. Our intent was to encourage specialty and green growers to incorporate new crops, and methods for growing these selections, into the cut flower program. The intent, also, was to develop a "Grown in Wisconsin" label that will be added to cut flower specialty crops to increase the marketing potential for greenhouse sales and green growers markets. Furthermore, the intent of the program was to hire two student interns. The interns would learn the cut flower and bedding plant production techniques needed to grow, evaluate and collect data for the cut flower program and for the Flower Growers' trial of selected bedding plants.

We hired student interns and a limited term employee to implement the planned programs. Student interns developed the new cut flower program at the Station and the bedding plant trials, which were very successful. The Station hosted a tour of the National Cut Flower Growers Association and now has contacts in the cut flower industry nation-wide. And the bedding plant trials showed definitive differences in the cultivars and company selections.

A web-site was developed that specifically focuses on the plants being trialed and programs developed at West Madison Trial and Demonstration Garden. The website can be found at www.cals.wisc.edu/westmad/garden. The evaluations for 2008 bedding plants, cut flowers, vegetables, and for 2007 have been posted on the new *Evaluation* pages. Field days are now posted and easy to update on a separate page for field days and outreach activities. The web site has already drawn interest and made release of information extremely efficient for all involved.

The plant trials revealed major differences in the cultivars even within one genera and species of bedding plants. Growers have, in the past, been able to view selections in California and more Southern states at company sponsored trials, but have had no opportunity to see the 100 Verbena cultivars grown in Wisconsin. The performance data shows that Wisconsin climate has a tremendous impact on quality and growth of all selections.

These plant trials were held at the University of Wisconsin West Madison Agriculture Research Station, 8502 Mineral Point Road, Madison, Wisconsin 53593 and supervised by Judith Reith-Rozelle, Assistant Director. Phone 608-262-2257. The results were published on the new website funded under this grant and can be found at http://www.cals.wisc.edu/westmad/garden/Evaluations.html by downloading the PDFs of various trials. Results were also published in the November, 2009 Commercial Flower Growers of Wisconsin (CFGW) Grower News newsletter was mailed and emailed to 132 CFGW members and shared with participants of a field day held on August 6, 2009 at the site to invite greenhouse owners and growers.

3) Goals Achieved: activities that were completed in order to achieve the performance goals and measurable outcomes for the project.

1. Conducted trials to determine the most popular cut flowers that will grow well in Wisconsin including annuals and perennials. Popularity of numerous species of plants for cut flowers were determined by holding field days open to the public. Results of the trials were posted to the website. (See section 6 for site).

2. Developed a web-site for dissemination of information gathered during trials for cut flowers, new flower lines, new fruit and vegetable selections, at the West Madison Ag Research Station. Maintenance and updates of the site are on-going. There have been thousands of visitors to the site since its introduction.

4) Lessons Learned: insights into the lessons learned by the project staff as a result of completing this project.

The most challenging part of the trials the summer of 2008 was predicting and overcoming the adverse weather that impacted all of the growing systems. The heavy rains in early summer and near drought conditions in late summer were a good test for the plants being grown.

The web-site needed clearance through the University and web URLs previewed by campus communication staff. All of the staff was very cordial and extremely helpful, but the knowledge curve on web-site rules within the college was very steep. Consequently, the web-site development was slower than anticipated and took someone with much more knowledgeable than a student intern.

5) Outcome Measures: progress achieved on long-term outcome measures.

The main measures of success of this program were the 1456 attendees at the two field days at the West Madison Agriculture Research Station and the 2352 viewers to the website. We are pleased at the interest of both growers and the public in the trials. While we did not have formal surveys, field day participants asked many questions and were extremely interested in the flower trial results. Response to the website has been very positive. Judith Reith-Rozelle posts a blog on the site which has become very popular. We are continuing to work on an interactive website for Wisconsin greenhouses so interaction between growers and researchers can flow in both directions more easily. From the public response during the field days and website visits and our web interaction, we truly feel the project was a success. We will continue to update the website on new trails to promote interest in expanding the offerings of flowers grown for sale to the public.

6) Additional Information: list of publications, websites, photographs that is not applicable to any of the prior sections.

The web-site developed specifically focusing on plants being trialed and programs developed at West Madison Trial and Demonstration Garden is: www.cals.wisc.edu/westmad/garden.

7) Project Contact:

John Esser, Executive Secretary
Commercial Flower Growers of Wisconsin
5301 Portsmouth Way
Madison, WI 53714
608-244-3088
jresser@charter.net

V. Commercial Flowers Growers of Wisconsin – Project B

Funds Awarded: $7,296.00

Project Title: Development and Distribute an Commercial Flower Industry Newsletter

Date of Award: 1/1//08

1) Project Background: initial purpose of the project, including the specific issue, problem, or need that was addressed by this project.

The Commercial Flower Growers of Wisconsin is an organization serving the Greenhouse Growers in the State of Wisconsin for over 50 years. Approximately only 20% of the growers in the state are members of the organization and receive regular communications. Only about 1 % of the non members avail themselves of the opportunities offered by the CFGW.

The CFGW will develop and distribute 6 issues of an 8 page newsletter to be sent to all greenhouse firms of record. This will be used to apprise the industry of suggestions to help increase their competitiveness in the market and address the following:

- site modifications
- sales promotions
- internet web site design
- variety cultivars
- new products
- other pertinent items
- media promotions
- plant culture
- usage and materials
- improved efficiency suggestions
- educational opportunities

Wisconsin serves as the site for approximately 700 individual Greenhouse Growing establishments. The majority of these businesses are owned and operated by families. Many are small in size and the only source of income. Less than 100 of these are members of the Commercial Flower Growers of Wisconsin, Inc (CFGW). The majority, therefore, do not benefit from the educational opportunities offered by this organization in Wisconsin.

The smaller firms, because of time, available labor, and knowledge do not attend any of the regional and national educational conferences where they might gain additional growing and marketing information.

Many of the operators are primarily growers and not business oriented and therefore lack good marketing techniques. In addition, many have not kept updated on the current use of the internet as it applies to their business.

The current housing concerns and economic times have resulted in a reduced market for Greenhouse production. In addition, the weather the past several years has not been suitable for spring sales, which is critical to this industry, thereby placing businesses in jeopardy.

The weather in spring of 2007 was good for sales and enabled most to be relatively successful, but the current concerns toward foreclosures and economic downturn have reduced the post seasonal sales and hopes for the coming year. Any information that might aide to reverse this trend is definitely needed by industry growers.

2) Project Approach: brief summary of activities and tasks performed during the grant period including the work accomplished in both quantitative and qualitative terms.

The purpose of this grant was to develop and distribute a Wisconsin greenhouse industry newsletter published by the Commercial Flower Growers of Wisconsin (CFGW) and sent to greenhouses, allied people and businesses informing them of developments in the state of Wisconsin, nation and world. Those businesses that do not learn and change will not survive but will be left behind opening the door to out of state greenhouses supplying the Wisconsin plant market.

There are over 500 greenhouses and related businesses and individuals identified by the CFGW in the state of Wisconsin. Most of these greenhouse businesses are small and have little or no contact with each other or outside sources for information about plant culture, new varieties, consumer trends, marketing, etc. in the industry. The greenhouse industry is changing rapidly with new products, plants and hard goods, improved insect and disease control methods, etc. For example the ornamental plant supplier Dummen USA is releasing 74 new varieties and species for the 2010 season.

Seven newsletters were produced, each containing six to eight pages, with articles written by the editor as well as industry leaders in Wisconsin and the United States. The articles covered such topics as the different types of fuels to heat greenhouses, the profitability of growing Poinsettias in Wisconsin, using plant growth regulators, ways to cut greenhouse energy costs, etc. These newsletters were mailed at key times during the year.

It is important to disperse information to Wisconsin greenhouse owners and grower who are not able to attend meetings. These meeting are often held far away from their businesses so the owners and growers are not exposed to the information needed to run an efficient, modern business. The information published helped keep them up to date on the rapid changes in the industry.

3) Goals Achieved: activities that were completed in order to achieve the performance goals and measurable outcomes for the project.

The main goal was to update and apprise the Wisconsin Greenhouse Growers of marketing and cultural information which they could use for their specific operation thereby increasing their ability to withstand various economic and weather situations that continue to decrease their ability to be competitive in the marketplace. Seven newsletters addressing pertinent

information to keep flower growers and sellers competitive in current times were produced and disseminated to more than 500 growers throughout the state. According to surveyed newsletter recipients, information was both timely and pertinent to business needs. We feel the project achieved this goal of informing growers to help them stay competitive.

4) Lessons Learned: **insights into the lessons learned by the project staff as a result of completing this project.**

Many greenhouse growers responded positively to receiving the newsletters and the value of the articles they contained. The CFGW executive secretary was asked about articles when he visited greenhouses as well as being called with questions about the articles printed.

A CFGW member proposed a project to publicize Wisconsin's greenhouses after reading an article on marketing published in the newsletter. A new grant proposal for Wisconsin Flower Trails, a printed and interactive map was the outcome of his suggestion.

5) Outcome Measures: **progress achieved on long-term outcome measures.**

Ultimately, the overarching outcome of this project was to increase membership in the Commercial Flower Growers of Wisconsin which would guarantee that educational opportunities necessary for keeping flower growers competitive reach growers. Membership was increased by thirteen members, an increase of fifteen percent due to the newsletter being received by many Wisconsin greenhouses. While we hoped to reach 15 new members, we are pleased with the outcome of this project and believe more non-member growers will seek out additional educational opportunities and avail themselves of the Commercial Flower Growers website even if they do not become members. We have had difficulty assessing grower changes in means of promotion and sales site design. Eight individual growers have contacted us promoting their sales site design upgrades but we have not been able to produce a successful survey or other means of notification to measure the number of growers whose marketing and sales sites have been influence by this project. Because eight growers came to us unsolicited, excited to share the changes they made due to this project, we assume that many more have also done so.

6) Additional Information: **list of publications, websites, photographs that is not applicable to any of the prior sections.**

The Commercial Flower Growers of Wisconsin website is found at: http://www.cfgw.org/

7) Project Contact:

John Esser, Executive Secretary
Commercial Flower Growers of Wisconsin
5301 Portsmouth Way
Madison, WI 53714
608-244-3088
jresser@charter.net

VI. Wisconsin Potato and Vegetable Growers Association

Funds Awarded: $95,432.00

Project Title: Potato Production and Storage Research

Date of Award: 10/1//07

1) Project Background: initial purpose of the project, including the specific issue, problem, or need that was addressed by this project.

The Wisconsin Potato and Vegetable Grower's Association (WPVGA) has identified several primary needs within the potato and vegetable industries directly related to potato and vegetable production and storage that would help the growers in Wisconsin be more competitive as we move into a new era of a world wide market place. These needs and objectives were identified through a special advisory committee that was appointed by the WPVGA board to look at potato issues, and the WPVGA vegetable division made recommendations to the WPVGA Board on vegetable specific priorities.

The general objective of this proposal is to increase the profitability of the potato and vegetable growers of Wisconsin by conducting potato and vegetable production and storage research focusing on increasing the field quality of produce and lengthening the amount of time potatoes and vegetables can be stored and by increasing the quality of stored vegetables.

Within the potato industry, massive storage losses in past seasons have highlighted our lack of knowledge about potato storage under the unique growing conditions that exist in Wisconsin. It is very clear that storability begins during the growing season and is influenced by a number of production practices. By conducting field research that is continued in a storage research facility on various methods of potato storage, we hope to identify ways to reduce produce losses in Wisconsin. Both the work done in the storage facility as well as the physiological work done before the potatoes are put into storage will be labor intensive and will require a tremendous amount of data collection.

On the vegetable side, current storage of carrots and onions is rudimentary and at times is not even in buildings. This research will greatly enhance our knowledge and ability to grow and store both carrots and onions for processing in Wisconsin, which should create additional opportunities to supply processors and the fresh market later in the marketing season.

2) Project Approach: brief summary of activities and tasks performed during the grant period including the work accomplished in both quantitative and qualitative terms.

This grant funded eight independent potato research projects through the University of Wisconsin - Madison. Each project dealt with a specific aspect of potato production and the problems the industry faces every season. Three of the projects had failures in during their initial stages and were terminated. A brief summation of the five successful projects follows:

Grantees: Amy Charkowski, Department of Plant Pathology
AJ Bussan, Department of Horticulture
Jed Colquhoun, Department of Horticulture
Charles Kostichka, Hancock Ag Research Station
Carrie Laboski, Department of Soil Science
Jiwan Palta, Department of Horticulture
Walter Stevenson, Department of Plant Pathology
Russel Groves, Department of Entomology

Improved quality of seed potatoes

a. We optimized a pathogen detection array for bacterial pathogens of potato. Two publications describing this method were submitted and are under review.

b. We screened several breeding lines for resistance to Potato virus Y.

c. We evaluated the virulence and host range of novel subspecies of *Pectobacterium*.

d. Trials were conducted at the Lelah Starks Seed Farm to produce disease free seed with different physiological age. Potatoes were grown at Hancock with different seed ages accomplished by manipulating planting date.

Improved quality and consistency of potatoes grown, stored, marketed and processed in Wisconsin

a. Quantify growth and development of multiple varieties with high market potential for WI. W2717-5, Premier Russet, Umatilla, Canela, and others were evaluated across different densities. These varieties were also grown and monitored for tuber bulking during the growing season. Accomplishments: Canela is being evaluated by fresh market growers and processors as a long term storage potato. W2717-5 has consistently proven to have excellent chip quality out of long term storage and growers are considering naming this line as a variety.

b. Studies were conducted to examine crop tolerance and weed control spectrum to experimental, non-registered herbicides in potatoes and several other vegetable crops. Viable potential products will be advanced to refined rate and timing studies, and pursued in registration via the Federal IR-4 Minor Crops Pesticide Registration Program.

c. Variety-specific weed management strategies were identified that may reduce herbicide use by up to 67%. Evaluated variety competitiveness of 22 potato varieties that were released between 1800 and 2005. Varieties differed in the ability to tolerate or suppress weeds, and are used to breed for competitive traits.

d. Conducted a comprehensive, statewide survey of potential insensitivity to the neonicotinoid class of insecticides in Colorado potato beetle (CPB). A total of four populations were observed with estimated resistance ratios (LD_{50} test population / LD_{50} New Jersey reference population) exceeding 20-fold.
e. Investigated the diapause biology of adult CPB at the Hancock Agricultural Experiment Station, Hancock, WI. The temporal patterns of adult emergence will be examined in the coming spring and recorded on potted potatoes that are placed in the cages Imidacloprid resistance assays will be performed weekly (or bi-monthly if needed) on selected groups of emerging beetles and results will be plotted to determine if there are any relationships between neonicotinoid susceptibility and delayed emergence or extended diapause.
f. Field performance experiments of insecticide treatments were set up in locations where CPB have exhibited a range of sensitivity to neonicotinoid insecticides from highly susceptible to significant levels of resistance. Standard probit analyses (PROC PROBIT, SAS Institute 2006) were used to model the concentration-mortality responses to estimate concentrations killing 50% of the exposed population (LC_{50}) for each insecticide.
g. Replicated field trials were conducted at Hancock, Endeavor and Antigo. Plots were planted and maintained according to recommended production and cultural practices for the respective areas.
h. A large-scale three-plot trial consisting of current SpudPro selections was established at the Hancock Agricultural Research Station. Information on yield, grade, size range, general tuber appearance, internal characteristics and specific gravity were collected at harvest.
i. Produced about 30,000 new clones in the greenhouse facilities at the Rhinelander Agriculture Experiment Station. Other activities at this station included seed multiplication of early and advanced generation clones In 2009, Wisconsin seed growers harvested 522 acres of certified seed of new WI varieties including W2133-1, W2310-3, W2717-5 and W6002-1R
j. Evaluated cold storage and fry quality of advanced clones. four new chipping lines (W5955-1, W6609-3, W6483.4 and W6484-5), all carrying scab resistance similar or better than Pike and MegaChip and improved processing quality were selected and advanced

a. About 850 early generation and 150 advanced selections were evaluated in summer trials at the Hancock Agricultural Research Station.
b. The field project during the 2009 growing season was completed. The field study was conducted successfully, with all samples and measurements completed in a timely manner.

Reduced losses of stored potatoes in Wisconsin

a. The interaction of potato variety and potato desiccation products was studied. Potato varieties differed in their response to desiccants, and differences in field observations carried through to sugar profiles after storage. This important observation will be examined in further research, and has important implications in potato storage quality.
b. Damage resulting from the phloem feeding leafhopper species, potato leafhopper (PLH), *Empoasca fabae*, was investigated on selected potato cultivars to determine impacts on tuber storage quality. Quality parameters (tuber fresh weight, specific gravity, and percent sprouting) will now be regularly assessed on stored tubers at pre-determined intervals post-harvest throughout the cold storage period extending up to 24 weeks.

Longer Storage Season

a. Successfully stored W2310 until June and processed with Kettle Foods. W2310 appears to have long term storage potential desired by chip industry. Confirmed optimal storage conditions for large scale carrot storage.

b. Conducted long term storage evaluations of potatoes in variety trials including fry testing and color analysis of tubers held at 42, 45, and 47 degrees.

c. Evaluated storage conditions for extended holding of fresh carrots and beets. Best conditions were 34 F and 99% relative humidity. This fall, vegetable canners in Wisconsin held 3,000 ton of beets for 6 weeks to protect from frost and can with high quality.

Increased Energy Efficiency in Storage Facilities.

a. Trials were conducted on long term storage of fresh market potatoes. Wisconsin potato growers provide 6,000 cwt of Russet Norkotah potatoes that were stored in 3 separate bins with 18 foot pile height. Each commercial scale research bin has different ventilation management strategy. Potato shrink and quality is being monitored as is pressure bruise development

b. Ventilation systems for long-term storage trials are being monitored for energy usage powering fans and documenting refrigeration load.

3) Goals Achieved: activities that were completed in order to achieve the performance goals and measurable outcomes for the project.

Improved quality of seed potatoes

- Trials conducted at Starks's farm helped improved consistency of physiological age of planted seed
- Optimizing pathogen detection and evaluating virulence of Pectobacterium contributed to improved plant vigor and quicker plant establishment
- Screening breeding lines for resistance to virus Y contributed to improved quality of harvested yield

Improved quality and consistency of potatoes grown, stored, marketed and processed in Wisconsin

Results listed in Section 2 have contributed toward the following goals:

- Improvements in fresh market and processing quality
- Improved management in the field leading to lower losses and better storage
- Improved crop and storage management to meet the end user quality standards
- Development of improved storing and processing cultivars
- Higher percent recovery of the processed crop
- Better product color by managing sugars

Reduced losses of stored potatoes in Wisconsin

Results listed in Section 2 have contributed toward the following goals:

- Yearly tuber losses in storage accrue from shrink, physiological disorders and disease.
- Reduced shrink (water/respiratory losses) with better management of storage climate
- Reduced physiological losses → blackheart, reducing sugars
- Reduced disease incidence within the storage
- Improved disease management in storage based on known pathogen load.

Longer Storage Season

Results listed in Section 2 have contributed toward the following goals:

- Improve storage management to lengthen the storage season
- Identify or develop varieties with longer storage life
- Reduce shrink
- Reduce losses to disease

Increased Energy Efficiency in Storage Facilities

Results listed in Section 2 have contributed toward the following goals:

- Identify areas of energy inefficiencies in compressors, air movement systems and insulation.
- Quantify efficiencies in storage facility and compare to existing storage facilities to quantify possible energy savings.

Share results with potato and vegetable industry in a format useful to producers and processors

a. Results were communicated at multiple meetings including:
    a. The Wisconsin Potato Grower Education Conference – 375 participants
    b. The Processing Crops Conference of the Midwest Food Processors Association – 150 participants
    c. The Annual Meeting of the Wisconsin Muck Crop Growers. – 45 participants
b. Results and recommendations derived from research were communicated by:
    a. Monthly articles in the Badger Common Tater
    b. Extension bulletins (refer to CRIS reports of researchers
    c. Publications in peer reviewed journals (refer to CRIS reports of researchers
    d. Weekly newsletters that updated growers and ag industry on crop progress and progress of research experiments.

4) Lessons Learned: **insights into the lessons learned by the project staff as a result of completing this project.**

Three of the eight projects were compromised during the field stages of the research so they could not be completed.

a. Student who was going to work on development of tests for tuber blemish diseases, such as silver scurf left graduate school limiting progress.

b. Screened several compounds for inhibition of a bacterial disease under field conditions, but improper spray tank cleaning killed the plot with herbicide residue.
c. Research on physiological age of seed has been compromised by virus infection of seed. Viruses can influence age expression of seed confounding results of the experiment.

5) Outcome Measures: **progress achieved on long-term outcome measures.**

There were four measured outcomes for the 8 studies in this project. Although the project is finished, many results are not final, but lead to new phases of study or have not been finished long enough to quantitatively measure the results in the terms planned. Original measured outcomes are listed with the current results.

- *Improved quality of seed potatoes*
  - 4% increase in yield and quality - These studies resulted in improved yield and quality of seed potatoes. These varieties are now being tested in on-farm grower trails to help determine the % increase in yield for each variety.

- *Improved quality and consistency of potatoes grown, stored, marketed and processed in Wisconsin*
  - 5% improvement in tuber quality and consistency – a number of varieties were identified as having potential for better yield and storage as well as improved pesticide development and disease information to increase tuber quality and consistency. However, we will not be able to measure the %5 improvement until all studies are complete and growers plant the varieties and follow the management suggestions.

- *Reduced losses of stored potatoes in Wisconsin*
  - 3.3% reduction in storage losses - Studies showed improved storage through study of varied species and pest treatment during growing as well as temperature and other controls during storage. Time of increased storage varied depending on the factors. All of these concepts are now being studied further before recommending best results/practices to growers.

- *Longer Storage Season*
  - A one month extension of the storage season will provide a market advantage valued – Both Potato and Carrot storage studies showed improved storage through study of varied species and pest treatment during growing as well as temperature and other controls during storage. Time of increased storage varied depending on the factors. All of these concepts are now being studied further before recommending best results/practices to growers.

6) Additional Information: **list of publications, websites, photographs that is not applicable to any of the prior sections.**

Results and recommendations derived from research were communicated by:

e. Monthly articles in the Badger Common Tater
f. Extension bulletins (refer to CRIS reports of researchers
g. Publications in peer reviewed journals (refer to CRIS reports of researchers
h. Weekly newsletters that updated growers and ag industry on crop progress and progress of research experiments.

7) Project Contact:

Duane Maatz, Executive Director
Wisconsin Potato and Vegetable Grower's Association
P.O. Box 327
Antigo, WI 54409
715-623-7683
dmaatz@wisconsinpotatoes.com

This grant funded 8 independent potato research projects through the University of Wisconsin - Madison. Subgrantees include the following researchers who had various parts in each of the studies:

Amy Charkowski, Department of Plant Pathology
AJ Bussan, Department of Horticulture
Jed Colquhoun, Department of Horticulture
Charles Kostichka, Hancock Ag Research Station
Carrie Laboski, Department of Soil Science
Jiwan Palta, Department of Horticulture
Walter Stevenson, Department of Plant Pathology
Russel Groves, Department of Entomology

VII. Wisconsin Nursery Growers Association

Funds Awarded: $29,588.00

Project Title: Educational Programs for Wisconsin Nursery Association

Date of Award: 1/1//08

1) Project Background: initial purpose of the project, including the specific issue, problem, or need that was addressed by this project.

Purpose: The industry is constantly challenged with new pests and plant problems, and operational and marketing challenges requiring knowledge and information to improve plant production, business operations, and product marketing. Continuing professional education for ornamental horticulture is limited for professionals in the industry and is needed to maintain or increase competitiveness and markets. WNA was able to offer continuing education opportunities to nursery professionals and horticulture students with seminars and presentations by University Researchers, marketing and other nursery experts, to improve and increase knowledge in business and marketing and in horticultural areas such as fertility, plant pests, breeding, propagation, growing medium and plant development. Education included the latest research and research findings, operational techniques and processes.

2) Project Approach: brief summary of activities and tasks performed during the grant period including the work accomplished in both quantitative and qualitative terms.

WNA produced 5 educational events over the period:
Winter Workshop in 2008, 2009 and 2010
Nursery Summer Field Day in 2008 and 2009

WNA held our annual educational Winter Workshop on February 6, 2008 at the Country Springs Hotel in Waukesha, WI. One hundred nursery, landscape and tree care professionals pre-registered for the workshop, however a winter storm prevented many from attending and the workshop could not be rescheduled. Forty-four people attended with five registering on-site. Our goal was 100 in attendance.

2008 Summer Field Day was held at Jung Seed Co., in Randolph WI and included 87 exhibitor booths displaying products and services for the nursery industry. Total attendance was 337 industry professionals. WDATCP, and UWEX were provided complimentary booth space. Tours of the nursery and the seed operations were provided throughout the day. A tour of the call center from which about 65 operators process up to 12,000 orders during the peak season for catalog sales. We fell short of our targeted goal of 500 industry professional attending. We believe this primarily due to the location the event was held.

There were no unexpected delays or impediments other than the winter snowstorm that impeded attendance for approximately 50% of our expected attendance at the February Winter Workshop.

Winter Workshop. An industry educational event, was held on February 12, 2009 at the Country Springs Hotel in Waukesha, WI. Approximately 95 Green industry professionals, students, and representatives of the university and extensions heard about plant growth regulators, nerve toxins, systemics, porosity, longevity, and more during a day packed with information.

Entomologist Dr. Raymond Cloyd, an associate professor and an extension specialist in Ornamental Entomology/Integrated Pest Management at the University of Kansas, opened the day's events with a discussion about tank mixing. The fine points of pesticide resistance were revealed in an absorbing presentation. He also spoke about systemic insecticides, with an in-depth discussion of the pros and cons of many different types of chemical deterrents, and explained just how the insects metabolize the products. Dr. Cloyd packed a lot of specific and helpful details into his instructive presentation. He eagerly shared his knowledge with those in attendance. A question and answer session following each presentation elicited further discussion on the issues raised.

Dr. Laura Jull, an associate professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, once again gave a thorough outline about each of the eight nominees for the WNA Plants of the Year, complete with pictures. Ballots were handed out and all Winter Workshop attendees were invited to vote on their choices for the 2011 Plant of the Year for each of the categories: Woody Ornamental and Perennial. Dr. Jull's presentation made a difficult choice much easier. The vote that day determined that the 2011 WNA Plants of the Year will be the Acer miyabei 'Morton' (State Street Miyabe Maple) and the Stachys monnieri 'Hummelo' (Alpine Betony). The Plants of the Year program was started by WNA to promote quality and underused plants to the public. Press releases detailing the chosen plants are sent to the local, state and trade media each spring to help boost interest and sales for nurseries, garden centers, and landscapers.

Bob Dahl, section chief of plant protection for the WDATCP, gave a careful and comprehensive examination of the latest information on plant pests and diseases in Wisconsin. He described how actions in other states have affected EAB infestations and control, and compared that to the approach Wisconsin is taking. Maps and photographs helped to illustrate the matter.

Following that, perennials expert Paul Pilon gave his presentations to the group. Paul’s company, Perennial Solutions Consulting, is located outside Grand Rapids, Michigan. Growing media, its desirable physical properties, formulations of controlled release fertilizers and how they should fit your production, juvenility, and vernalization were all part of a comprehensive talk on the subject. His second speech covered controlled release fertilizers in greater depth and revealed his exhaustive background on the topic. Following a question and answer period, Paul graciously signed copies of his book entitled Perennial Solutions: A

Growers Guide to Perennial Production. The fact that all of his books sold out at the workshop is an indication of how well received he was that day.

Through both events we accomplished the expected measurable outcomes and goals as indicated in the work plan of the application during the time period. Our objective of developing and offering educational seminars and programs for nursery industry professionals was met with these two programs. We deem them as successful due to the number of participants from the nursery industry that participated and provided favorable.

WNA's August 13, 2009 Field Day was held at Johnson's Nursery and included 99 exhibitor booths displaying products and services for the nursery industry. Total attendance was 414 industry professionals. WDATCP, UWEX, WDNR, and the Mid Am Horticultural Trade Show were provided complimentary booth space. Tours of the nursery and propagation areas to learn propagation techniques incorporated in plant production at the nursery, Selective pruning and plant selection characteristics and processes were also presented.

Winter Workshop 2010 was held Feb. 24th in Waukesha, WI with 87 in attendance. Dr. Bert Swanson, a retired professor of the University of Minnesota, and current industry consultant presented "Herbicides for the Nursery and Landscape, and provided detailed documents for attendees to use as a reference. A publication from North Carolina University on weeds that are common in the nursery was provided to each attendee. Bob Dalh of the WDATCP gave a regulatory state pest update. Dr, Laura Jull, of UW-Madison's horticulture department provided presentations and discussions on alternatives to the ash tree now in jeparody from the emeral ash borer. Dr. Jull also provided a report on her research project funded by the 2008 SCBG on Compost Tea Use in Nursery Production.

WNA feels that these educational events are imperative to the success of our industry and will continue both the Winter Workshop and Filed Day educational programs into the future with or without supplemetary funding.

3) Goals Achieved: activities that were completed in order to achieve the performance goals and measurable outcomes for the project.

WNA staff and a committee of association volunteers coordinated the events including making all arrangements with the event locations, ordering services such as meals, refreshments, AV, and hotel room arranfgements. WNA staff created brochures and distributed the event registrations via direct mail, telephonesolicitaiton, via the web, national and state trade publications, and via e-mail to the interested parties. Budgets and financials were completed by WNA staff. WNA staff and association volunteers were at each event to coordinate the event itself. Staff completed a profit/loss stateemnt and review with the WNA Board on the events outcomes and measurable results. Surveys were taken of the participants to guage their interest and satisfaction.

Groups and individuals that benefited from these educational acticvities include nursery and landscape professionals, students in horticulture, master gardeners. Host nurseries benefited

from hacing other professional growers visit their operations especially if they were a wholesale grower which all of our Field Day hosts were. University of Wisconsin and DATCP received positive exposure to the industry they serve and/or regulate. The nursery association benefits from maintaining the memebrship by providing a valuable service to its members and the industry as a whole.

4) Lessons Learned: **insights into the lessons learned by the project staff as a result of completing this project.**

There were no negative outcomes. In person training and education is still valued by nursery professionals as our attendance at all events was at expected levels. Weather can always affect the attendance, but due to the seasonal nature of the nursery and landscape business, the winter months in Wisconsin cannot be avoided for training events; thus we may have a winter storm event occur that we cannot plan for such as in 2008.

5) Outcome Measures: **progress achieved on long-term outcome measures.**

Groups and individuals that benefited from these educational acticvities include nursery and landscape professionals, students in horticulture, master gardeners. Host nurseries benefited from hacing other professional growers visit their operations especially if they were a wholesale grower which all of our Field Day hosts were. University of Wisconsin and DATCP received positive exposure to the industry they serve and/or regulate. The nursery association benefits from maintaining the memebrship by providing a valuable service to its members and the industry as a whole. Our educational events funded by this project are definitely having long-term positive effects on our association members. Without these events, much of the research and new practices in our industry would never reach our individual growers.

6) Additional Information: **list of publications, websites, photographs that is not applicable to any of the prior sections.**

The Green Side Up publication which reported event is available through the Wisconsin Green Industry Federation office: WGIF, 12342 W. Layton Ave., Layton Ave, Greenfield, WI 53228. These publication contain photos and articles events.

7) Project Contact:

Brian Swingle, Executive Director
Wisconsin Nursery Association, Inc.
12342 W. Layton Ave.
Greenfield, WI 53228
414-529-4705
bswingle@toriiphillips.com

VIII. Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection

Funds Awarded: $20,000.00

Project Title: SavorWisconsin.com

Date of Award: 10/1//07

1) Project Background: initial purpose of the project, including the specific issue, problem, or need that was addressed by this project.

The WI Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection continues to receive requests from both consumers and wholesale food buyers requesting assistance in locating Wisconsin grown foods.

As the most comprehensive agricultural website in Wisconsin, SavorWisconsin.com is well positioned to meet the need for helping buyers 'buy local' from Wisconsin's specialty crop producers. Optimizing the SavorWisconsin.com website for this purpose will require the re-instating of a staff assistant who can work to:

1. Enter the relevant marketing information for each Wisconsin Specialty Crop producer into the SavorWisconsin.com website. DATCP will work with specialty crop producers and producer associations to obtain information to populate the specialty crop profile sections.
2. Determine language for conversion to consumer-focused site. DATCP will work with project partners at the UW Extension and the Wisconsin Apple Growers Association to shift language to increase accessibility of specialty crops to search engines and visitors searching within the site.

DATCP will also work to actively promote key specialty crop industries on the site's homepage. Increasing the prominence of Specialty Crops on the homepage will help increase traffic to SavorWisconsin.com by consumers who are searching for these products. The end result will be increased awareness and ultimately increased purchases for Wisconsin's specialty crop producers.

The purpose of this project is twofold:

- To improve the accuracy and currency of specialty crop producer profiles and farmer's market listings on SavorWisconsin.com and
- To increase relevant traffic to the SavorWisconsin.com website, especially for key specialty crops.

2) Project Approach: brief summary of activities and tasks performed during the grant period including the work accomplished in both quantitative and qualitative terms.

Project Task 1 – Increased Listings

Purpose: Content is critical to ensuring optimal traffic from search engines, the most common source of web traffic. In order to make SavorWisconsin.com a useful and relevant marketing tool for Wisconsin specialty crop producers, continual content updates and site refreshes are critical. This project task developed a component to improve the quality and quantity of Wisconsin specialty crop producers listed on the SavorWisconsin.com website.

Approach: To increase site content, a farmers market listing update and expansion project was implemented, resulting in a 60% increase in Wisconsin Farmers Market listings on the site from the previous year. As specialty crops are a key feature of farmers markets, this project increased consumer awareness of how to purchase these products. A new function was also added that prohibits outdated farmers markets and other events from being displayed on the live site. Current data ensures optimal traffic from search engines; this new function will thus optimize search engine results. Finally, a new tool was created to keep active specialty crop listings updated with the most current information.

Project Task 2 – Improved Accuracy and Search Capability:

Purpose: Also important in achieving greater site traffic is ensuring that web visitors are able to find the information they seek. At the time of the grant proposal, site visitor usage behavior suggested that the SavorWisconsin.com search functions needed further optimization. The proposed site enhancements improved search capabilities within the site which has helped connect Wisconsin consumers and food buyers with Wisconsin's specialty crop industry.

Approach: DATCP staff collaborated with online marketing program partner, Skyline Technologies, to streamline the SavorWisconsin.com homepage. The new site has increased search capabilities for specialty crops and producers by replacing a county search function with more practical and user-friendly zip code and city search functions. Funds also supported efforts to update existing specialty crop producer profiles by optimizing the keyword sections of each of the targeted specialty crop listings to create a more robust list of key search words. Both efforts helped improve the accessibility of specialty crop producers within the site.

Project Task 3 – Online Promotion:

Purpose: 1) A series of articles featuring Wisconsin's specialty crops were launched on the SavorWisconsin.com homepage to help to drive traffic. 2) An online press announcement was released to launch the new homepage.

Approach: 1) The team developed articles focusing on key specialty crop industries that were featured on the homepage between the months of October 2007 and September 2008. Key specialty crop industries and focus areas included:

Apples, cranberries, squash, sweet corn, maple syrup, fresh market vegetables, strawberries, berries, cherries, and carrots. Table 1 shows the specialty crops featured by month on SavorWisconsin.com.

Table 1. SavorWisconsin.com Specialty Crop Features by Month

Month	**Feature**
October – November 2007	"Autumn Colors from the Fall Harvest" – apples, cranberries, squash, sweet corn
March – April 2008	Maple Syrup
May 2008	Fresh Market Vegetables
June – July 2008	Strawberries
July – August 2008	Berries & Cherries
September 2008	Carrots

2) The SavorWisconsin.com manager worked with Skyline Technologies to create an online press release announcing the homepage redesign. Online PR is significantly different than traditional off-line PR in that there is strategy involved in writing to optimize search engine results. Strategies employed, as recommended by Skyline Technologies included:

- Strategy: Include web address alongside keywords, be sure to use the http:// format so there is a link directly to the site embedded in the article.
  Purpose: Connect article to the site & drive traffic back to the site.
- Strategy: Substitute more commonly used terms or key words for less popular jargon. Avoid flashy terms, use simple language.
  Purpose: Use common language in the article to match more commonly used search phrases, this will allow search engines to find the article more readily.
- Strategy: Repeat choice keywords for the article three times if possible, including using them in the title of the article. Do not "stuff" or overuse the keywords—this may result in penalties by search engines (2% usage recommendation).
  Purpose: Optimize search engine results.
- Strategy: Substitute desired keywords for pronouns such as it's or it.
  Purpose: Optimize search engine results.

The press release was submitted Friday, June 20, 2008 via the following websites/Online PR services:

- PRWeb.com
- WiBusiness.com
- http://www.24-7pressrelease.com
- http://www.express-press-release.net

The release was strategically submitted in June to maximize on consumer interest in local foods at the beginning of the harvest season. It was released to hundreds of online publishing houses through the four services listed above.

3) Goals Achieved: activities that were completed in order to achieve the performance goals and measurable outcomes for the project.

Increases in web traffic were measured by evaluating page views through monthly tracking reports generated from Net Tracker, web data analysis tool. In March of 2008, it was discovered that the data collected through Net Tracker was faulty. To remedy the situation and ensure accuracy, a well-tested data tracking system, Click Tracks, was implemented as the new web data analysis tool for SavorWisconsin.com. Click Tracks services are delivered through the partner web developing agency, Skyline Technologies. The web agency had been collecting SavorWisconsin.com traffic data through Click Tracks since July of 2006, however this service was not enlisted by SavorWisconsin.com until March of 2008. To rectify the faulty data from Net Tracker, the web agency was able to deliver accurate monthly data reports dating back to July, 2006. It is this data that is being used to generate this final report.

Below are a table and diagram revealing Click Tracks data collected over the course of the granting period, October, 2007 through September, 2008. One distinction between Net Tracker data and Click Tracks data is the type of data collected: Net Tracker reported page views while Click Tracks reports overall site visits. Both measurements reflect site traffic and are sufficient for the purposes of tracking progress on the site.
Looking at the data below, it is clear that the percentage increase goals were not only met but surpassed.

Diagram 1. October 2007 – September 2008 Site Visits to SavorWisconsin.com

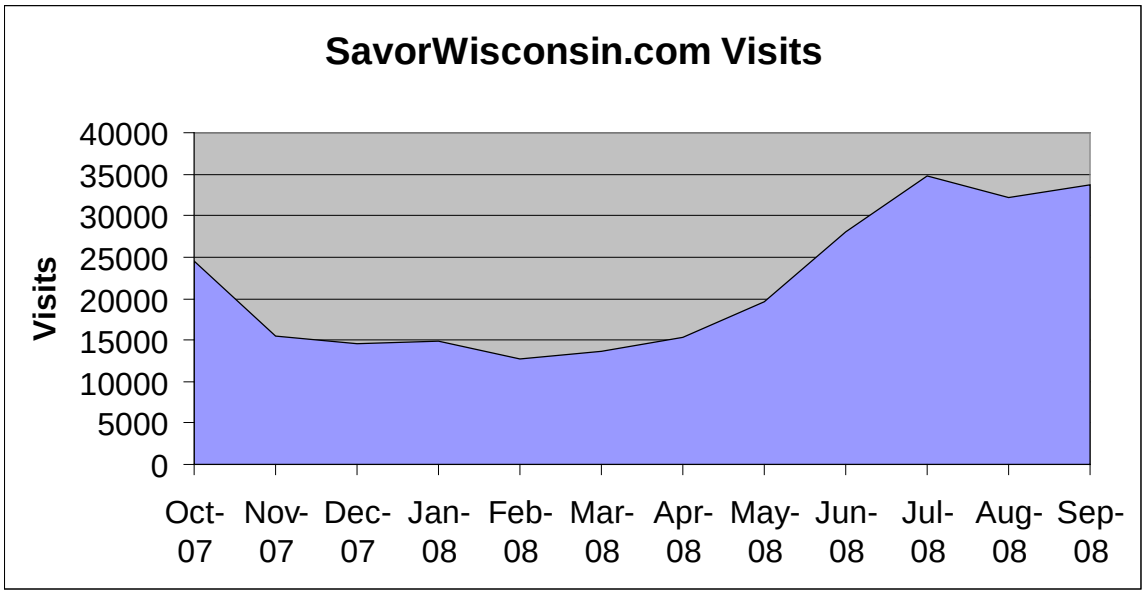

Table 2. Site Visit Data by Month October 2007 – September 2008

Month	**Site Visits**
October 2007	24,554
November 2007	15,451
December 2007	14,576
January 2008	14,864
February 2008	12,717
March 2008	13,670
April 2008	15,279
May 2008	19,544
June 2008	28,019
July 2008	34,759
August 2008	32,126
September 2008	33,642

Data Analysis:
There is a natural seasonality to Savorwisconsin.com site traffic with October generally peaking above other months as the traditional harvest time in Wisconsin. For this reason, the data analysis will start with data collected from November 2007 through September 2008. The overall goal of the original grant proposal was to increase traffic to the site by 30% (20% in 2007 and another 10% in 2008, see 'Expected Measurable Outcomes' above). Site visits increased by 54% from November 2007 to September 2008. The project tactics not only resulted in meeting the 30% increase goal but surpassed it by 24% over a shorter time period than originally projected. The early completion of the project is due to Specialty Crop Block Grant funds that supported a new hire to focus more time and attention on the site enhancements.

Plan to disseminate information to industry:
SavorWisconsin.com is an online promotional tool for expanding and growing the agricultural industry in Wisconsin. By increasing producer listings, improving accuracy and search capability, and boosting online promotion, SavorWisconsin.com has become a highly effective mode of disseminating key information between specialty crop producers and consumers. The site currently boasts 1,504 producers (up from 1,436 in 2007), 229 farmers markets (up from 149 in 2007), and 168 businesses that feature specialty crops and other agricultural-based commodities.

4) Lessons Learned: **insights into the lessons learned by the project staff as a result of completing this project.**

We had excellent luck with the web company who takes care of our site. Getting the right company can make or break your success with a project like this! We also began utilizing social media to expand the opportunities we are providing visitors to interact with the site and producers on it. This will build on new trends and techniques in web development with a look at impact and potential relevance to the web user. Social media is a new area for agriculture marketing so there is lots of information on suggested positive uses but since it is

relatively new, there are no state statutes addressing it which makes our legal department reluctant to allow us to use it. This has been very frustrating and sounds like it will not be resolved in the near future.

5) Outcome Measures: **progress achieved on long-term outcome measures.**

All expected Measureable outcomes were achieved or exceded.

Expected measurable outcomes of the initial proposal include:

2007
- Increase traffic by increasing 2007 page views +20% to 422,000

2008
- Increase number of vegetable listings +10% from 342 to 376 by December, 2008
- Increase number of fruit listings +10% from 301 to 331 by December, 2008
- Increase traffic by increasing 2008 page views +10% to 464, 2008

Each project task resulted in positive long term outcomes, as depicted in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Project Tasks & Long Term Outcomes

Project Task	**Long Term Outcomes**
1. Increased Listings	▪ Creation of tool that keeps farmers markets & other events current on the site ▪ Creation of tool that keeps producer listings updated
2. Improved Accuracy & Search Capability	▪ Implementation of enhanced, consumer friendly search functions
3. Online Promotion	▪ Feature article archives are kept live on the site. The keywords placed in each article will continue to drive traffic from search engines.

6) Additional Information: list of publications, websites, photographs that is not applicable to any of the prior sections.

Savor Wisconsin press release referred to in sections 2 and 3:

Contact: Abby Bachhuber
Email: Abby.Bachhuber@wi.gov
Phone: (608) 224-5134

SavorWisconsin.com Adds Powerful New Search for Finding Locally Grown Foods and Farmers Markets

Just in time for the harvest season, SavorWisconsin.com has launched a new, streamlined site that allows users to search by city, zip code and even radius for Wisconsin foods. SavorWisconsin.com features the most complete online directory of Wisconsin's food producers, farmers markets, and local food events. Whether you are looking for strawberries, spinach, cheeses, meats, or honey, SavorWisconsin.com will have a bountiful array to select from.

"SavorWisconsin.com is a valuable tool for both Wisconsin producers and consumers. Producers can market their products for free, and consumers can satisfy their local food needs in this one-stop-shop," said Secretary of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection Rod Nilsestuen. Designed to respond to rising consumer demand for local foods, consumers can search for a variety of Wisconsin foods in a wide range of areas across the state. The website features over 1,000 Wisconsin products, over 200 farmers markets, and a host of special events.

SavorWisconsin.com is managed by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, University of Wisconsin – Extension, and the Wisconsin Apple Growers Association. To use this resource or add your business to the listings, please visit http://www.savorwisconsin.com. Additional inquiries can be sent to info@savorwisconsin.com.

7) Project Contact:

Nicole Breunig
Senior Agricultural Marketing Consultant
WDATCP
2811 Agriculture Drive
P.O.Box 8911
Madison, WI 53708
608-224-5080
nicole.bruenig@wi.gov