



**Possibilities Unbound.**

**Indiana State Department of Agriculture  
Specialty Crop Block Grant Program-Farm Bill  
Final Performance Report  
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## Michigan City Mainstreet Association-Buy Fresh, Buy Local Campaign

### **Project Summary**

Michigan City Mainstreet Association's "Buy-Fresh- Buy Local" Campaign have used advertising and marketing to encourage going green. There have been articles in the newspaper, signage, and banners toward the campaign.

### **Project Approach**

Due to late contracting and budget issues with the state this project started later than originally planned. In the spring of 2010 MCMA worked with Foster Printing to print advertising pieces for their campaign. Once the Farmers Market Season started press releases were sent out to 4 area newspapers who ran ads along with information about their website, vendors and various information aspects about the campaign. Later in the spring advertisements were placed on radio and television stations. The MCMA made the most of speaking opportunities to various community groups and organizations on the benefits of buying fresh, local produce. And my early summer 2010 banners & signage were placed throughout the city.

In 2010, Michigan City Mainstreet had 13 vendors participating at the time. They currently have 19 vendors and are confident that the number will continue to grow. MCMA had volunteers count traffic and estimated 200 people attended each Saturday

### **Goals and Outcomes Achieved**

To help local farmers promote the concept of eating fresh, locally grown foods. While providing fresh produce to nutritionally and financially challenged neighbors at lower costs than they'd find at grocers. Also, to increase tourist attendance at the farmers market. In 2010, Michigan City Mainstreet had 13 vendors participating at the time. They currently have 19 vendors and are confident that the number will continue to grow.

As for consumers who shop the market, MCMA estimated 200 consumers on any given Saturday, and based off of voluntary surveys taken by these consumers on average customers spent \$10 more at the market than in past years. Therefore, increasing the sales by at least \$10 per customer.

### **Beneficiaries**

The "Buy Fresh, Buy Local" Campaign has helped to increase the number of vendors who participate in our farmers market. This campaign has also helped to increase the number of visitors and tourists to visit the farmers market. The campaign has raised awareness and availability to fresh, locally grown foods and assisting local farmers in getting their produce to the families which need it.

In 2010, Michigan City Mainstreet had 13 vendors participating at the time. We currently have 19 vendors and we are confident that the number will continue to grow. As the Michigan City Farmer Market doesn't have a gate nor it has a pedestrian traffic counter, our estimate is based on the number area populated and the maximum occupancy per a specific area, although the number could fluctuate due to weather inclement or other factors outside the market control, Also our estimates is based on the estimated number of parking and a rotation of every 2 hours with 2 people per vehicles, there is currently approximately 50 parking spaces in a close proximity for the Farmer Market this will equal to 100 people per 2 hours, since the market is open for 4 hours, the total estimated number of people is 200 people, also we noticed a walking traffic from the Downtown area, and other events from the Mainstreet area, such as the Art Walk or the increase number of Galleries that are open on the same time as the market, this could be tributary to the walking traffic which we are estimating a 20% of the total number above, this will bring the total estimated number to 240 people utilizing the market every Saturday.

### **Lessons Learned**

That there is always hope to help economically depressed areas which are in Michigan City where nutritional needs are among many other needs that are not met on a regular basis.

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### **Additional Information**

The funding has allowed MCMA to rent space near our current site and has been successful in helping us accept more vendors selling their produce. This campaign has also been successful in helping to educate residents about the nutritional and economic value of buying fresh, local produce.

### **Madison Area Chamber of Commerce Foundation – Indiana Wine Trail**

#### **Project Summary**

Jefferson County, Indiana has 4 wineries, more than any other county in the state. A challenge for the Indiana wine industry is that many consumers are unaware of Indiana's award-winning wines. Promoting this successful region will assure a statewide increase in demand for Indiana grown, wine grapes and value-added Indiana agriculture. This project further enhanced the development of the Indiana wine/grape industry and value-added agriculture in Indiana through cooperative marketing efforts led by the Madison Area Chamber of Commerce Foundation. This was accomplished through enhanced development of the "Indiana Wine Trail", tri-state agri-tourism cooperative marketing effort program.

The Indiana Wine Trail was created to increase the exposure of Indiana grapes-wines-wineries. Additionally, the goal was to provide both an incentive and a gateway for agri-tourists to enter from Ohio and Kentucky therefore increasing the states "imported revenue". The Indiana Wine Trail had drawn more than ten thousand persons from the "tri-state" area. All were exposed to Indiana value-added agriculture. The growth potential for the Indiana Wine Trail is considerable due to the trend toward close-to home travel and the variety of activities offered at each winery, vineyard and participating community.

As noted in the mid-term report the Hanover College calendar year presented several challenges. Students were occasionally off on spring, fall or holiday break during most opportune time for HD filming. Rainy spring weather presented special challenges for quality content footage of Indiana vineyards. Utilizing students and college resources often lends a unique perspective and creativity to projects. When their efforts also double as a class or "graded" project the outcome can be of exceptional quality. However, student schedules and subsequent difficulties in scheduling related to weather combined to create substantial difficulties in obtaining quality HD video. While footage is adequate it was not "superior". However, "out-takes" provided abundant "comic" material that was not appropriate for this application but may be viable for such media as u-tube.

1 of 6 wineries preferred the project had been supported by a local visitor's center. However, their concern did not impede their participation in the overall process. The remaining 5 requested continued grant efforts regardless of supporting agency. All 6 wineries were positive about grant and project outcomes. Photo libraries are available to all trail members and provide a secondary gain from grant dollars which is expected to extend for several additional years in the form of press releases, media kits, newsletters etc.

### **Project Approach**

Filming was completed where-ever possible. Still shots were merged in video montage style to lend the feel of "film". Outcomes were positive. Secondary gain was the desire by all wineries to continue expanding both film and still photo libraries. The use of montage stills opened a variety of options for commercials in the 15, 30 and 60 second ranges.

### **Goals & Outcomes Achieved**

Outcomes have exceeded goals. The fall event saw attendance from the entire tri state region with more than half of all attendees from either Kentucky or Ohio. Indiana produced wine sales jumped sharply during the promotional period. There was a residual "fall over" of increased web traffic and sales during the late fall and holiday seasons. The 2009 season reflected a minimum 25 % increase in sales at most wineries. This surpassed our original goal of 15% sales increase. Those that did not have exact figures reported a "huge increase" in sales. The trail can also say there was an increase in web site hits after the event was over when comparing previous numbers. The trail has committed to continue press releases, event marketing and most recently decided to invest in developing overall marketing strategy and plan for the trail. After looking at sales, web site hits and attendance number this event can be measured as a success.

## **Beneficiaries**

All goals were met or exceeded. There was measurable increase in Indiana produced wine sales at a minimum of 25% for the two events that were included in the program. Overall improvement in developing a unified image has proven an important motivation tool for trail members. The grant has provided a stepping stone to long term, cooperative marketing efforts.

## **Lessons Learned**

Still photography is a much easier task than video. Editing digital photos that might have issues related to poor lighting, fog cover etc. is a simple process compared to HD footage. However, HD footage is highly desirable and worth the extra time and multiple efforts

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## **Additional Information**

The grant funded efforts have laid a strong foundation for future quality advertisements, press releases, media kits etc. The lingering effect of the grants is well demonstrated in the trails dedication to continue to develop marketing efforts through the establishment of a formal plan and strategy. The investment of grant dollars has a substantial impact on the sale of Indiana wine and therefore enhances Indiana's specialty crop agriculture efforts.

### **Purdue University-Creating a Signature Wine Style for the State of Indiana**

## **Project Summary**

This project would attempt to create and promote a signature wine style for the State of Indiana. The Purdue Wine Grape Action Team needed to determine which grape variety can produce the most distinct, productive and valuable wine grapes in Indiana. From there the Action Team produced experimental wines to determine the most suitable wine style for this varietal, guide the subsequent commercial production of this wine at cooperating Indiana wineries, and coordinate the promotion, advertising and marketing for the State's new Signature Wine.

As wine grape production has increased in Indiana, growers are looking for a signature grape variety and wine style that can give them a major competitive edge in the local and global market place. While other states have been extremely successful growing, producing and marketing varietal wines that are most suitable for and adapted to the environment of their states. Successful examples include Oregon: Pinot Noir, California: Zinfandel and New York: Riesling.

## **Project Approach**

The Traminette grape was selected as the grape variety that best suited the local climate, winemaking capabilities and consumer preferences. This was determined by looking at four areas; viticultural expertise, enological know-how, marketing skills and a unified regional wine industry.

Other accomplishments and results from this grant project include:

- Produced Purdue Extension publication FS-59-W Commercial Winemaking Production Series: “Traminette Winemaking -- How to produce Indiana’s signature wine“
- Produced Purdue Extension publication FS-60-W Commercial Winemaking Production Series: “Traminette Vineyard Management -- How to grow Indiana’s signature wine grape“
- Taught special extension workshops on Traminette at the 2009 and 2010 Indiana Horticultural Congress.
- Introduced dedicated “Indiana Traminette Wine of the Year” trophy at the annual Indy International Wine Competition. First winner was Creekbend Traminette from Oliver Winery of Bloomington, IN.
- Introduced Traminette as first *Indiana Signature Wine* at State Capitol news conference.
- Developed and initiated regional marketing campaign “Try On Traminette – Indiana’s Signature Wine” including web site and promotional materials.  
<http://www.tryontraminette.org>

Approach to meet the objectives involved a four-tiered plan.

- 1.) A research vineyard full of over 70 different grape varieties.
- 2.) Analyzing the diversity of winemaking among the state’s wineries and determining the most widely used varieties in or to be as inclusive as possible.
- 3.) Promotion of the Indiana signature wine through flyers, media interviews, web site, advertisements in local and regional newspapers and radio & TV stations.
- 4.) A special division within the Indy International Wine Competition honoring the very best of the Indiana Signature Wines. This category was established to solely judge Traminette wines produced by Indiana Winery’s.

### **Goals & Outcomes Achieved**

- Received national press coverage after news conference that introduced Traminette as the first *Indiana Signature Wine*.
- At last count, there are now 33 wineries selling Traminette wines of different styles.

- More wineries are in the process of growing and making Traminette based on the two “Best Practices” Purdue Extension information developed and provided through this grant.
- Empirical evidence suggests that all wineries making and selling Traminette wine have had a substantial increase in demand based on the marketing campaign.

### **Beneficiaries**

Indiana Wineries and Indiana Grape Growers by increasing the volume of Indiana wine sold, while growing a national and state market share of this local value-added agricultural product.

### **Lessons Learned**

Additional resources are needed to sustain the successful marketing campaign.

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### **Additional Information**

See attached two Extension Documents.

## **Behavior Corp, Inc. – Community Supported Agriculture**

### **Project Summary**

This project has significantly increase the demand and sales of local specialty crops within central Indiana by developing unique marketing and distribution strategies available to a Community Support Ag Program (CSA) operated by the Center for Mental Health, Inc. a non-profit organization in partnership with Anderson University, a social enterprise employing students and individuals with serious mental illness. This project marketed CSA produce through a newly developed wellness program covering 600 employees, an on-line store and utilization of an existing transportation infrastructure to distribute products to the workplace in Madison, Hamilton, Boone and Marion Counties.

The purpose of this project was to solve some of the marketing and distribution issues surrounding central Indiana organic and specialty crops. The project did this by expanding CMH’s current CSA customer base, adding an online store through company-based Intranets, accessing an existing market (CMH employees, Anderson University faculty, staff and students); and utilizing an existing distribution infrastructure to get product from farm to the customer.

## **Project Approach**

The CSA program has been identified as “Aspire Harvestland” and offers many products to the community. Since May 1, 2009, the Community Supportive Agriculture (CSA) program has been developing and designing a web page as well as setting up a Facebook account. The project was coordinated and administrated by full time employee David Robb who has national and local expertise in organic farming, marketing, sales, and distribution. The website for the on-line store was developed and set up so individuals can assess information relative to the operations of the CSA program, and started taking orders in the spring of 2009. From there additional promotional materials were developed to draw more attention to this project. Promotional Materials include printed educational materials to be distributed at Anderson University and CMH Clinic Offices by Garden Manager during educational and promotional presentations. Additionally, over 287 hours have been used as a means of setting up the web page and designing a brochure for distribution. Continued modifications to the facebook and website have been completed.

## **Goals & Outcomes Achieved**

By the end of this project there was an increase in membership of the CSA to 100 families. Increase employment from 11 to 18 (CMH clients, staff, and university students), and a significant increase in the demand and sales of local organic and specialty farm products by solving the marketing, sales and distribution barriers between farmer and customer. This program was also successfully integrated into CMH’s current staff of 600 and its Anderson University partner via existing wellness programs. It also increased employment opportunities for CMH clients with severe mental illness by expanding its market garden social enterprise.

## **Beneficiaries**

Besides the use of online tools such as the website and social media this project also benefitted the many families who now can receive fresh and local produce as well as the employees of the hospital and university who have found unique ways to work this program into their clients recovery, needs and abilities.

## **Lessons Learned**

Continued maintenance of website and other online programs offer many advantages to our organization.

## **Contact Person**

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## **Additional Information**

We would like to thank you for your support in the development and implementation of the website. This has allowed Aspire Indiana to expand its market by reaching individuals outside our community. The funds were utilized not only in setting up a website, but additional venues such as an online store and facebook. Additionally, we have been able to refer outside organizations to this website as a means of providing them with relevant information on establishing community supported agriculture.

## **ISDA-Farmers' Market Cost Share Program**

### **Project Summary**

Most of Indiana's Farmers' Markets are small and lack the financial resources to pay for promotional items. To increase consumer awareness and overall appeal of Indiana farmers' markets, ISDA would continue the cost-share reimbursement program to provide grants to Indiana farmers' markets. ISDA implemented the Farmers' Market cost-share reimbursement program for the 3<sup>rd</sup> consecutive year, due to SCBG funds from previous years. This program provided grants to Indiana farmers' markets by reimbursing 50% of the cost of farmers' market advertising, displays and promotional materials, up to \$500.

### **Project Approach**

During the first few months of 2010, ISDA advertised the details of the reimbursement program. ISDA continued to promote the program at the annual farmers' market workshops sponsored by Purdue Extension and the Indiana Cooperative Development Council as well as running news releases, e-mail blasts and utilizing social media sites to ensure the word was getting out about this program.

### **Goals & Outcomes Achieved**

ISDA expected this program to increase consumer awareness of Indiana Farmers' Markets causing them to experience an increased visitation and the overall growth of farmers' markets. With this new funding source, ISDA polled the participating markets on both 2009 attendance and 2010 attendance and found visitation to increase by 96.6%. Part of the criteria for farmers' markets participating in this program was to report attendance two weeks before the promotions and two weeks after. ISDA also found an increase in the number of vendors at the farmers' markets by 6.35% when compared to the number of vendors participating in 2009.

### **Beneficiaries**

The cost-share reimbursement program assisted 20 farmers' markets around the state allowing them to promote their market. Farmers' markets in Indiana provided a source of venue for over 2,000 Hoosier producers. The increase in promotion added to the traffic flow and the venue of these farms. Several times throughout the market season ISDA heard that markets were afraid that the downturn in the economy might decrease consumer interest, but this was not the case and all of our participating farmers' markets were very appreciative of the financial assistance.

### **Lessons Learned**

ISDA found the third year for this program to be easier than the first at getting the markets to participate. Some markets are not as well organized as others, but after the first round some of the unorganized markets saw where neighboring farmers' markets were making purchases and then receiving reimbursements and were able to copy their methods and participate in the program this year.

### **Conclusion**

To continue this momentum of buying local, ISDA is very pleased with the increase in consumer awareness and overall appeal of Indiana farmers' markets, ISDA will continue

this cost-share reimbursement program again next year with SCBG funds from our 2010 grant.

### **Additional Information**

The following 20 Farmers' Markets received funding: Monroe County FM, Bloomington Community FM, Shelby County FM, South Milford FM, Richmond FM, Bloomington Winter FM, Harrison County FM, Avon FM, Community FM of Owen County, Scott County FM, South Side FM, Highland Street Market, Historic Lafayette FM, FM at Minnetrista, Orange County HomeGrown FM, Carmel FM, Fulton County FM, Vincennes Historic FM, Valparaiso FM, and the Binford FM.

## **Indiana Humanities Council-Dig IN**

### **Project Summary**

In an effort to introduce Indiana grown produce to Indiana consumers, the Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) partnered with various non-for-profit agencies in the state to develop and implement a day devoted to highlighting Indiana specialty crops at local restaurants. In order to sell Indiana produce to Indiana consumers, the general public must develop an understanding of why they are important, what they do for the local economy, and how to use them in their own kitchens at home. ISDA outlined the steps to be taken to establish the continuation of consumer outreach and communication associated with this event, and continue educational programs throughout the year leading up to the 2011 event.

### **Project Approach**

ISDA, in conjunction with the Indiana Humanities Council, Indiana Office of Tourism, the White River State Park, INShape Indiana and educators located throughout the state, held a very successful campaign kick-off to promote the Taste of Indiana in August of 2009, hosted the first Dig IN in 2010 and now again in 2011.

Dig-IN allowed consumers to start to associate with the fresh, quality produce in their area, they also learned how to connect with chefs, restaurants, farmer's markets, CSA's and other resources through which they can buy local and make dishes in their own kitchens. Local restaurants featuring seasonal menus, and the assessments from various industry publications regarding 'local' as one of the primary trends in food right now, we believe that this event helped provide a new avenue for specialty crop producers around the state to showcase and directly market their products to a captive audience in an environment that will allowed them to both educate and establish relationships that will lead to repeat business and industry growth. Many producers were on hand to discuss their farms, location and produce with visitors.

The Webpage was developed and became a useful tool with the assistance of social media to help drive traffic to the site. Advertising was also done on local TV and radio stations as well as newspapers to help get the word out about this event.

### **Goals and Outcomes Achieved**

Surveys were conducted after the event from event attendees, chefs and the beer and wine vendors. ISDA found that 72% of the event attendees claimed to have learned more about Indiana agriculture and over 50% were more willing to purchase Indiana Beer and dine at the Restaurants featured. Of the chefs responses over 80% were pleased with the quality, amount and type of Indiana grown produce they received. And the beer and wine vendors surveyed 33% said this event added increased consumer awareness to their products.

ISDA also tracked website hits once the site was launched, and received over 11,000 page hits.

During June 2011 the Indiana Humanities Council hired a web master and had him meet with a select group of the Dig IN Planning Committee to go through expectations for the website along with ideas for the layout and functional capabilities of the website. During the month of July 2011 the web developer implemented these plans and developed the website. The website was live and fully function by the end of July.

The website contains information regarding the event (maps, vendors, times, date, etc) as well as bios and pictures of the various chefs making the food and producers who grow/provide the food. Educational and Nutritional tips on the variety of fruits and vegetables being served as well as a few recipes and cooking tips as teasers.

### **Beneficiaries**

Groups that benefited from this event include Indiana wineries, breweries, farmers' markets, locally-focused restaurants and specialty crop producers. The citizens of the state of Indiana also benefited and were given an opportunity to connect with where their food comes from, and how to support their local, food economies. This event also increased business opportunities for producers and local chefs to do business together.

### **Lessoned Learned**

ISDA did learn that picking your partners for such an event was a crucial aspect to the success of the event. In the beginning there were other partners who ended up not being a good fit for this project so based off the Food for Thought initiative that the Indiana Humanities Council has for exploring ideas on all things food related. This seemed to be a natural fit and compliment Dig-IN nicely.

### **Additional Information**

The Dig-IN website can be found at <http://digindiana.org/2011/index.html>

## **Farmers' Market Web Tool**

### **Project Summary**

In the past ISDA had a pdf version of the Agri-tourism directory posted on ISDA's website. With more and more consumers becoming computer savvy, it was imperative that ISDA move the printed directory to an on-line format.

### **Project Approach**

In order to do this a scoping project would first have to be completed where ISDA worked with Indiana Office of Technology (IOT) to explore the various needs and functions of this proposed web tool. ISDA met several times with IOT to discuss

all the options and features this site would contain as well as being user friendly and having quick load times. In the end ISDA had a plan in place to make this web tool a reality.

### **Goals and Outcomes Achieved**

The goal of this project was to provide the Indiana Farmers' Market directory to constituents in a cost effective manner. ISDA worked with the Indiana Department of Technology to ensure this resource would be able to do the following for both consumers and producers; enter Farmers Market Information, functionality to search for Markets', a map view of Farmers' Market locations by county, admin Functionality, delete/edit Market information. This project set ISDA up to be able to actually develop the website in the future; however, current grant funding was just be used for the scope.

### **Beneficiaries**

Approximately 20,000 constituents were able to use the print-version of the Farmers' Market and Agritourism Directory. Obviously ISDA expects that number to grow exponentially once the online version is available. Anyone from anywhere would be able to use this site to find maps, directions and detailed information about each individual entity listed in the directory. The information would always be up to date as an ISDA staffer would have admin capabilities to go in and update information whenever a change occurred.

### **Lessons Learned**

Although funds from this round of SCBG were only used for the scope, funds from the 2010 SCBG were used on the actual development of this web tool and the functionality to search for Markets', a map view of Farmers' Market locations by county, admin Functionality, delete/edit Market information.

## **Indiana Upland Wine Trail-Uncork the Uplands**

### **Project Summary**

The Uncork the Uplands event for the Indiana Uplands Wine Trail was a great example of how to best develop, market and produce a top notch event to showcase the marriage between the wine trail wineries' agricultural value-added wine products and Indiana foods and agriculture. The wine trail needed to create an event that would become an annual signature tradition for the wine trail that would be unique in its offerings of both Indiana wines and foods and the methods in which they are showcased. We also needed to come together as a group and market the event in a way that would ensure its success from a bottom line business perspective. Thirdly, we needed to be sure that the event actually delivered the benefits that were marketed to our customers and have the wine trail ensure that the goal of showcasing Indiana agriculture was delivered and that the event would be worth producing on an annual basis.

### **Project Approach**

To develop and market the event, the wine trail hired a social media and event planner to work with the trail on creating a signature event and being sure it was marketed in a way that guaranteed our minimum number of tickets were sold to balance the event's costs and that our goals were met.

To showcase the marriage of wine and food the wine trail hired Andrea Robinson a wine and food culinary expert to be our guest speaker for Saturday night's dinner and to be our chef for the cooking demonstrations on Friday evening.

We also secured sponsors and partners from Indiana agriculture and area restaurants, as well as, Huber's Plantation Hall to provide foods and develop wine pairings that showcased the best in both the wines and the foods produced here in Indiana.

To showcase the agricultural aspect we also chose Huber's Orchard and Winery as our venue as it not only serves as a major winery but also a long and large established specialty crop food producer as well.

### **Goals & Outcomes Achieved**

As described in our original application, the overall goal of the Indiana Uplands Uncork the Uplands was to brand southern Indiana as a viticultural and agri-tourism destination so as to boost the market share and sustainability of its members and associates and strengthen the rural economy of the region as a whole.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Uncork the Uplands Event was a tremendous success! The Friday event titled "Culinary & Cocktails" capitalized on the culinary background of our guest speaker, Andrea Robinson. Andrea had amazing things to say about the quality of the IUWT wines while delighting the audience during live cooking demonstrations. Guests enjoyed wine tasting, Indiana foods from Farm Bloomington, Capriole Cheeses, Mapleleaf Farms, 240 Sweet Treats, the Indiana Pork Producers, Tabula Rosa, and Eagle Point. Mango Salsa, Venison, Soba Noodles, Honey Ginger Ice Cream, Gourmet Cheeses & Tortes were just among a few of the items served from these magnificent Indiana restaurants and organizations. Over 300 people turned out for this first time event!

The Saturday event titled "The Winemaker's Dinner" was a huge success with over 230 guests being seated for a 4 course meal. Indiana legislators, Uncork Sponsors such as Olinger Distributing, Innovative Labeling Solutions, Ivy Tech, The Indiana Winery & Vineyard Association, the Indiana Department of Agriculture, and many others were seated to hear from our Indiana winemakers and owners. Each course of the meal highlighted wines from the IUWT and throughout the dinner the IUWT wineries and their owners came forward to speak on behalf of their wines and their winemaking style. What an awesome opportunity to hear directly from those who care for the grapes, harvest, and produce the wines that were being poured throughout the evening! And if that wasn't enough Andrea Robinson spoke about the IUWT wines and how they compared to those she had tasted both nationally and internationally. Andrea was on hand for a book signing and to talk to guests about her simple approach to wines from her recent book "Great Wines Made Simple".

Through surveys with the other wineries we did not a slight increase in sales of around 10% during and after the event. The website also saw a 20% rise in traffic which has remained consistent in the months that followed the event as well.

### **Beneficiaries**

The measurable outcomes of development of the event that occurred during the grant period were a written budget, work plan, and marketing plan and promotional pieces to be used and updated annually for the event. The pieces are all now in place and it will be a much simpler process in the future to plan our annual event with the critical planning and promotional templates in place. The event's success is evident by the number of attendees at the events - 300 on Friday night and 230 on Saturday evening. The 23 hotel room nights sold for the event were also measurable outcomes of the success of the event itself and its impact on area businesses. The event not only supported the venue, wineries, and hotels in the area but also our agricultural food partners such as Capriole Goat Cheese and the area restaurants that showcased their delicious offerings at the cocktail event.

### **Lesson Learned**

We certainly learned that putting together the various pieces for a large event takes a host of people completing various tasks based on a solid plan of action and a hard-working coordinator and oversight committee.

We also learned that marketing in the "new economy" is not like the old days, and people tend to wait to the very last minute to purchase tickets so as to be sure they are able to make the commitment to attend. Marketing avenues are also much different and creating "buzz" about your event, especially a new event is very difficult yet so very critical.

We also learned that delivering an event that meets expectations means that each and every person responsible for a food, wine or activity that touches a guest must be clear on what is expected of them so that the consumer views the experience positively.

We also learned that the Friday night informal event was much more enjoyed by the guests and a much better way to showcase the agricultural products than was the formal banquet dinner. We are refocusing the 2012 event to expand on the cooking demonstrations, food and wine pairings, and educational wine tastings offered at Friday night's event. We also believed that creating a single event on a single day rather than two events on two nights would work better and be less confusing for those wishing to enjoy the event as a whole.

### **Conclusion**

For our first event of this kind we could not be more pleased with the event, our customer's feedback and our ability to attract 530 guests our first year. We are already securing the venue for next year's event so that planning can begin. Our guests were so very delighted to be able to taste new foods from Indiana that they had not tasted before and to learn how to use those foods in cooking demonstrations, by pairing them with wines and supporting local agricultural producers by enjoying these foods and wines at their own dinner tables in the future!