

The Adventure



Volume 2 Issue 3

Winter Conference 2006

Wisconsin Agricultural Tourism Association, Inc.

Interesting Speakers, Topics To Highlight WATA Conference

Make your plans now to attend the Wisconsin Agricultural Tourism Association's Annual Conference on January 8-10, 2006 at the Olympia Resort and Conference Center in Oconomowoc. A full schedule of speakers will be on hand to present a wide array of tourism topics.

Wisconsin Agricultural
Tourism Association
Conference
January 8-10, 2006
Olympia Resort
Oconomowoc, Wis.

The Conference, part of the Wisconsin Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Conference, opens on Sunday afternoon with the Marketing Symposium. The conference runs through noon on Tuesday.

Kevin Bernhardt of UW Platteville will give

the keynote address at 4:00p.m. Sunday entitled "Risk Management—What is It and Why Should I Care?" Kevin is a Farm Management Specialist for University of Wisconsin – Platteville. He acquired his bachelor degree from Iowa State University, his master degree from

North Carolina State University and his PhD from the University of Nebraska – Lincoln. His current focus is on dairy modernization, milk



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Time to Renew Your Membership

Take time now to send in your membership renewal for 2006! The membership form is included with this newsletter.

As a member of the Wisconsin Agricultural Tourism Association, you receive:

- Savings on Registration to the Annual Conference (See story above.) and other

educational events sponsored by WATA.

- Listing and website link on the Association website, www.visitdairyland.com.
- Inclusion in *Wisconsin Country Adventures* promotional activities.
- *The Ag Venture* newsletter featuring news and informative articles published 4 times annually.
- Assistance as needed from government agencies such as WI DATCP, UW Extension, Department of Commerce, and Wisconsin Department of Tourism.
- A voice with these agencies in helping to form policies and directions.

Mail Your Membership Today!

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2006 WATA Conference Schedule

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price risk management and general risk management. Kevin will present the second part on risk management, "What Do I Do About It?" on Monday afternoon.



Matthew Sullivan of Circle S Farms, is the Assistant Manager of The Ohio State University Farm Science Review. Matthew provides technical assistance to his family farming operation. Circle S Farms focuses their production on strawberries, raspberries and pumpkins. They also raise sweet corn and small acreages of vegetables. In 2006, Circle S Farms will be celebrating 25 years of "Fall Fun Days," a 30 day agritainment celebration of the har-

vest. Matthew will be speaking about his family's operation on Sunday afternoon.

Bill Ryan is from the Center for Community and Economic Development at UW Madison. He will demonstrate how to geographically map a your customer list using free software available from UW Extension. Bill has been with the UW Extension since 1991 as a specialist in downtown and tourism business development. He assists economic development and business leaders in identifying retail and service opportunities that make "market sense" for their communities. Bill will be using actual mailing lists from two WATA members to chart where most of their customers live. With this information, users can identify where to accurately target their market-



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WATA Board List

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Wisconsin Common Market

Perhaps you have seen businesses like yours selling goods and services on the internet, but you don't think you are big enough to have a cyber storefront of your own. The Wisconsin Common Market might be right for you.

The Wisconsin Common Market is funded through the Wisconsin Department of Commerce and the USDA Rural Development Office to help small Wisconsin businesses increase their markets through online sales. Just about any product or service sold by a Wisconsin company can be sold on the Market. There is a limit of 50 products.

Product categories include; apparel, textiles and accessories; specialty foods; arts and fine crafts; professional services; lodging and special attractions; and others. Products can be found by searching the category, the product name, or the business name.

The cost to be part of the Wisconsin Common Market is \$25 per month. Currently, the Market is offering the first three months free.

Members are required to have a credit card merchant account and a *PayPal* account. If you have ever bought something on *eBay*, you might be familiar with *PayPal*. *PayPal* and the credit card account will have separate transaction fees.

The Wisconsin Common Market offers financial assistance to help cover some costs to those who qualify. Additionally, the Wisconsin Women's Business Initiative has a new program especially for the Wisconsin Common Market members to provide small business loans. For information on these loans, contact Danee Smith-Kiernan of the WWBIC at (414) 263-5450.

The benefit of the Wisconsin Common Market is to help small Wisconsin companies do business online—regardless if they already have a website or not. They will help you get set up, help you to secure the *PayPal* and merchant account, and support you with training and

advice.

In addition, they are promoting the website through internet marketing firms, publicity, email lists, advertising and links to other websites, all with the purpose of getting more hits on the site. Their brochure states they are receiving 125,000 hits per month.

For more information, contact Dace Zoltners, Wisconsin Market Project Manager at (715) 836-7511, ext. 174 or email her at

dace@wisconsincommonmarket.com.

To take a look at the site, go to www.wisconsincommonmarket.com.



WATA member Apple Holler Orchard and Restaurant hosted the annual Wisconsin Apple Recipe Contest over the Labor Day weekend. Contestants from all over Wisconsin were invited to display their finest desserts, salads, and breads. The event was held in conjunction with Apple Holler's Paula Red Festival. Visitors enjoyed an apple pancake breakfast in the restaurant, live music, the petting zoo, and, of course, apple picking. There was also an Orchard Run/Walk event held as a fund-raiser for the Multiple Sclerosis Society.

Apple Holler is located on I-94 near Sturtevant south of Milwaukee.

2006 WATA Conference Continued

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ing message.

As the Department of Commerce's Small Business Ombudsman, Carol Dunn serves as the advocate for Wisconsin's small businesses. Carol works to assist small businesses by ad-

Conference Happenings

Trade Show—There will be a reception in the Trade Show area on Sunday evening from 5:00-7:30 p.m. with snacks and beverages. On Monday, the Trade Show opens at 8:00a.m with a continental breakfast. Concessions will be available outside the Trade Show area at lunchtime. The Trade Show closes at 6:30p.m. on Monday night.

Monday Evening Meal—As in the past, participants will have the opportunity to eat together at a local restaurant. Sign-up sheets will be available at the reservation desk to give the restaurants some idea of the number of people to expect. You will order off their menu and pay for yourself. Take advantage of this opportunity to network with other attendees.

Silent Auction—Donate new or slightly used items to be sold to the highest bidder. The proceeds will be used by the Association for promotion. Bring your donation to the Registration desk. Bidding closes Tuesday morning.

Apple Cider Contest—Again this year, the Apple Growers Cider Contest will take place on Monday in the Trade Show. All attendees are invited to sample the entries and cast their vote for the favorite.

WATA Annual Meeting—The Wisconsin Agricultural Tourism Association Annual Meeting will be held on Tuesday at 11:20a.m. In addition to the yearly updates and financial reports, board vacancies will be filled. If you are interested in serving on the WATA board, please contact Anna Maenner at (920) 478-3852.



vancing their views, concerns and interests to state policy makers. Carol will discuss regulation reforms and how they will affect small businesses.

Kelly Haverkamp serves as Executive Director of Wisconsin Rural Partners, Inc. and has been since 1993. In the past she has worked as a legislative assistant in the Wisconsin Legislature, as Director of Constituent Relations for the Governor, at the Wisconsin Department of Development (now Commerce) and in her own public relations firm. Kelly's career focus areas include organizational development, community economic development, strategic planning, public relations and design. Kelly will talk about her experiences with Australia's regional food and ag tourism.

Karen Raymore is the Chief Executive Officer of the Door County Chamber of Commerce and Visitor &



Convention Bureau and was recently elected Chairperson of the Wisconsin Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus (WACVB). She is also currently serving as President of the Wisconsin Assembly for Local Arts and was appointed by Wisconsin Governor Jim

Doyle to the Governor's Council on Tourism in July of 2003. Karen and Jerry Boucher of Wisconsin's Northwest Heritage Passage will be discussing how to set up regional tours in Wisconsin and how you can partner with operations close by to create a "tour" for visitors to your area.

Other speakers include Jerry Phillips of the Old Rittenhouse Inn of Bayfield, Howard Erickson of Van Galder Bus Co., Kurt Barth of Merrill Hills Landscape Co., and Molly O'Connell.

The Annual Conference is a member benefit of the Wisconsin Agricultural Tourism Association. Cost of the three day conference is \$115.00 for two people from the same business. Additional people are \$10.00 each. WATA members or members of the Wisconsin Apple Growers, Berry, or Fresh Market Vegetable Growers Associations may deduct \$25.00 from the fee. Room reservations can be made by calling the Olympia Resort at (800) 558-9573. Mention the Conference to get the special room rate.

2006 WATA Conference Schedule

Sunday, January 8th Marketing Symposium

Breakout Session I—Choose one

1:00–2:00 p.m. Circle S Farms, An Agritourism Success Story
 Matthew Sullivan, Circle S Farms, London, Ohio
 Sales Room Savvy—What’s Selling, What’s Not
 Carol Wiersma, The Good Apple, Stockholm
 Diane Cain, Cain’s Orchard, Hixton

Breakout Session II—Choose one

2:00-3:00 p.m. *Pyromarketing*—Fan the Flames of Your Marketing Plan
 Anna Maenner, WATA Executive Director
 Regulatory Reforms—What Wisconsin’s Small Businesses Need to Know
 Carol Dunn, Small Business Ombudsman, Wis. Dept. of Commerce

Breakout Session III—Choose one

3:00–4:00 p.m. Grants to Help You Diversify and Add Value to Your Farm Products
 Deirdre Birmingham, Consultant, Mineral Point
 Apple, Berry, Vegetable Grower Roundtable
 Grower Directed Discussions

Keynote Address—Everyone attends

4:00 p.m. Risk Management—What Is It and Why Should I Care?
 Kevin Bernhardt, UW Platteville

5:00-7:30p.m. Trade Show opens with a reception including snacks & beverages

Monday, January 9th

8:00 a.m. Registration/Trade Show Opens - Continental breakfast in Trade Show Area

9:30 – 10:15 a.m. Mapping Your Customers
 Bill Ryan, Community Business Development Specialist,
 Center for Community and Economic Development, UW-Extension

10:15 – 11:00 a.m. Tickling the Tourist’s Palate - Australian Regional Food Tours
 Kelly Haverkamp, Executive Director, Wisconsin Rural Partners Inc.

11:00 – Noon Wisconsin Trails – Tours in the Dairy State
 Karen Raymore, Door County Chamber & VCB “Kingdom so Delicious”
 Jerry Boucher, Wisconsin’s Northwest Heritage Passage

1:15 p.m. Risk Management: What Do I Do About It?
 Kevin Bernhart, UW Platteville

2:45 – 3:30 p.m. Marketing to the ‘Romantic’ Couple
 Jerry Phillips, Old Rittenhouse Inn, Bayfield

3:30 – 4:15 p.m. Getting on the “Coach” Route
 Howard Erickson, Van Galder Coach USA

4:15 – 5:00 p.m. Cultivating Agritourism
 Anna Maenner, WATA Executive Director

6:30 p.m. Trade Show Closes

NOTE: This is a partial listing of the Conference schedule. There are also sessions of interest on apples, berries, and fresh market vegetables. A complete Conference Program is on our web-site at www.visitdairyland.com

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2006 WATA Conference Schedule Concluded

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Tuesday, January 10th

- 8:30 – 9:15 a.m. How Do I Market, Let Me Count the Ways
WATA Member Panel
- 9:15 – 10:15 a.m. Designing your Landscape with the Tourist in Mind
Kurt Barth, Merrill Hills Landscape Co., Pewaukee
- 10:45 a.m. Day by Day—Have Your Say
Molly O'Connell, Waukesha County Technical College/Mount Mary College
- 11:20 – Noon WATA Annual Meeting
Bryan Meyer, WATA President, presiding

The WATA Annual Conference is part of the Wisconsin Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Conference which is open to all—both members and non-members. The Conference is sponsored by the UW Extension in cooperation with the Wisconsin Apple Growers Association, Wisconsin Berry Growers Association, Wisconsin Fresh Market Vegetable Growers Association, and Wisconsin Agricultural Tourism Association. Use the enclosed Registration Form to sign up. Mail with payment to WATA, 211 Canal Rd., Waterloo, WI 53594.

Wisconsin State Fair Century Farm & Home Award

To qualify for the award, your family needs to prove continuous family ownership of a property in the state of Wisconsin for either the last 100 or 150 years. All property owners will be honored at a special Sesquicentennial and Century Farm and Home Award program held on August 8, 2006, in conjunction with the 2006 Wisconsin State Fair, August 3 - 13.

Honorees will receive complimentary Fair tickets, an awards breakfast, commemorative photo, certificate and outdoor display sign provided by Hillshire Farm, who has been a longtime program sponsor.

The Century Farm and Home Program started in 1948 in conjunction with the State's Centennial Celebration. There are currently over 7,850 Century Farms and Homes nestled throughout the Badger State. The Sesquicentennial Program originated in 1998 as part of the State's Sesquicentennial Celebration, and since that time, over 425 families have been honored.

In 2005, 94 Century Properties and 26 Sesquicentennial Properties were honored for carrying on Wisconsin's rich family farming tradition. To request a copy of either application, write to Century or Sesquicentennial Farm & Home Program, 640 S 84 St., West Allis, WI 53214, call Jill Albanese, Program Coordinator, at 414-777-0580, or call the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, Bureau of Farm Services at 1-800-942-2474. Applications are due by March 1, 2006.

More Upcoming Educational Events

After the WATA Conference, two different educational conferences are planned for later in January. The Farm Direct Conference is a one-day workshop for direct marketers. It will be on Saturday, January 21, 2006 at the Waukesha County Technical College campus in Pewaukee. Sessions dealing with business and marketing topics will be featured. For more information, contact Rose Skora at 262/857-1945.

The Midwest Value Added Agriculture Conference will be January 27 & 28, 2006 at the Plaza Hotel & Suites in Eau Claire. The Value Added Conference offers various general and breakout sessions dealing with marketing, value-added products, government regulation and financial issues. Call Heather Flashinski at 715/834-9672 for information on the Value Added Conference.

Make Your Tourism Conference Reservations, call the
Olympia Resort
(800) 558-9573

Mention the Conference for the special room rate.



Happy Holidays
From the
WATA Staff

Getting the Most from Trade Shows

By Chuck Maenner, WATA Staff

Whether it's a trade show, community fair, or farmer's market, the rules of the game are different when you are "on the road" than when you are simply in your place of business. Working shows require more preparation and a little different type of attitude. Here are some tips to consider when using trade shows in your marketing plan.

1. Preparation Long before the trade show even begins, some serious thought should be made about your approach. Decide exactly what the purpose of your participation is. Are you going to do direct sales or generate leads for future marketing? Give some thought as to what your booth will look like. Do you have professional looking signs, brochures, catalogs, and business cards? Do you have a logo that will help people find you among the myriad of other exhibitors? What clothing will be worn? Many businesses already have company shirts for this purpose. Employee nametags are a nice addition. Finally, decide who will work the booth? Make sure the employees also know your intentions. Review with them what they will say and do. Choose employees who are knowledgeable and outgoing.

2. Meet the public Once at the show, interaction is the key. It is critical that you and your staff meet and greet the public properly. It's frustrating when I see company representatives at a show reading a magazine or locked in a personal conversation and can't be interrupted. Eating food in the booth should be prohibited. When you're at a show, you are representing your company and in plain view of everyone who walks by. Smile and talk to the people. Don't ask, "May I help you?" or "Want a brochure?" These questions usually lead to dead-end responses. Instead, think of interesting, open-ended questions – "Are you taking a vacation this year?" "Have you ever been to *your town, or county?*" "Do your children like farm animals?"

I love freebies at trade shows. I will take pens, pencils, note pads, and refrigerator magnets whether I need them or not. You should use these items to enhance your company's message. Experts suggest that promotional items should be kept out of sight and given only to those people you have talked to. It is more memorable for the customer to be *given* the item. Remember, you are not at the show to merely give away thousands of cheap pens.

Once talking to a prospective customer, use the standard persuasion techniques. First, ask them questions to find out what interests them about your product. Secondly, demonstrate your business's ability to fulfill their desire or need. Give them a brochure or show them your product. Third and most importantly, ask them for a commitment. Perhaps that means taking an order or simply getting their name and address for future follow-up.



3. After show follow-up Once the show is over, it is easy to forget it and move on to the next event but this is where the real work begins. Fill any orders you took at the show or contact potential customers who wanted more information. This should be done within two weeks of the show. The longer you wait to contact them, the more likely their desire will fade, or worse yet, the chance they will go to a competitor!

Trade shows and fairs can be expensive but worth the money if you reach the right people. To maximize your investment, you need to contact as many people as possible with a professional appearance and friendly attitude.

Welcome New WATA members:

Manitowoc Area Visitor & Convention Bureau
Melissa Giebel (920) 683-4388

Tomah Convention & Visitors Bureau
Kelly Murray, (800) 948-6624

Down A Country Road Gifts & Tours, Cashton
Kathy Kuderer, (608)654-5318

Wisconsin Agricultural Tourism Association



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www.visitdairyland.com

*Please return your
Membership
Renewal for 2006.*

The Fuzzy Pig—A Strange Name, An Interesting Place

Located two miles south of Whitewater, travelers will find a renovated barn selling all sorts of items. *The Fuzzy Pig*, named for a stray cat that came one day and ate and ate until he became 'a fuzzy pig,' is the vision of owners Dick Kraus and Roger Gransee.

It took over ten years to rebuild the old barn. Original materials were gathered from the surrounding area to accurately restore the rustic barn. Today, it houses two floors of items including antiques, bath and beauty items, artwork, clothing, home accessories, and some specialty foods.

In the future, the owners would like to add a 1950's-style malt shop/soda fountain and a coffee and tea room offering soups, sandwiches, and homemade desserts.

To find The Fuzzy Pig, go south out of Whitewater on Wisconsin St. At Willis Ray Road, continue on Clover Valley Road a half mile to The Fuzzy Pig.



Pictured are some of the antiques displayed at The Fuzzy Pig. The renovated barn has two floors of antiques, gift items, soaps, clothing and foods.

Thanks to The Fuzzy Pig for sponsoring this edition of the AgVenture. To feature your business in the AgVenture, indicate your preference on your Membership Form.