



Kentucky Cooperator

Volume 10, Issue 2

Spring 2012

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KCARD

Brooks Meats Partnering for Success

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Brooks Meats in Walton Kentucky began with the dream of owner Steve Brooks. After years of working in the slaughter business Brooks had a vision of creating a butcher shop and retail market where people could come and get local, top grade meats, and farm fresh produce. In 1985 Brooks and his wife Mary Catherine decided to go after the dream and opened Brooks Meats.

“We opened that first store with just 3,000 square feet of space,” explained Steve. “Today we have over 28,000 square feet with a full-service butcher shop, deli, restaurant, and catering service.”

Brooks Meats has also become known in the community for the variety of fresh local meat products it creates, thanks to Stefan Nuemann the master butcher and sausage maker at Brooks.

“We were just unbelievable lucky to meet Stefan when we did and to have him join our team at Brooks,” said Steve. “I wanted to take a new direction in our meats, and he has been the person to help get us going in the direction we wanted to go.”



Stefan Nuemann with Steve and Mary Catherine Brooks at Brooks Meats in Walton.

Stefan had been in the food and meats business his whole life and was trained in Germany as a master craftsman in butchery and sausage making.

Steve and Stefan began working together to create a line of value added meat products for the business when they were approached two years ago by Rich Laing with the Kentucky Center for Agriculture and Rural Development (KCARD).

“Rich had heard about us because of our work with the Kentucky Department of Agriculture (KDA) Kentucky Proud program,” said Steve. “We began working with him on a business profile, looking at our distribution operation, and looking for ways to align further with KDA and incorporate other KY Proud products and customer into our business.”

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Save the Date

KCARD Summer
Board Meeting

July 26, 2012

Value of a Board

KCARD as a private nonprofit corporation is managed or governed by an elected board of directors. In my view a major strength of KCARD are the individuals serving on the board that represent Kentucky agricultural organizations, institutions and business sectors. Individuals currently serving on the KCARD Board of Directors represent Kentucky Farm Bureau, CoBank, University of Kentucky, Kentucky Department of Agriculture, Governor's Office of Ag Policy, Kentucky Council of Cooperatives, Kentucky Association of Electric Cooperatives, Kentucky Cattlemen's Association, Agritourism, Nursery/Aquaculture and Farmers' Markets.

The KCARD Board of Directors meet quarterly with staff in a structured business meeting to review financial reports and to receive reports from the Executive Director and individual staff members regarding programs, projects and work activities. The board then has the relevant information needed to make decisions to strengthen KCARD programs and services for clients. The staff values the input and counsel of the KCARD directors and takes the necessary steps to carry out their directives to

improve the overall performance of the organization.

The KCARD Board of Directors sets policies that guide staff in providing services to clients, reviews and updates the KCARD business plan; adopts an annual operating budget and monitors operating expenses quarterly; conducts an annual performance evaluation of the Executive Director; has an audit conducted by a CPA firm each year and does short term and long term strategic planning for KCARD programs and services.

The KCARD staff leans heavily on the knowledge, experience and directives from these individuals to provide the best possible services to Kentucky agricultural entrepreneurs and agribusinesses. The success of KCARD programs and services can largely be attributed to the strong guidance from its Board of Directors and the organization benefits greatly from the time they devote to serving as directors. A strong Board of Directors makes for a good organization or business operation and I thank all that have served or currently serve on the KCARD board.

MarketReady Sessions

The MarketReady Training program addresses the market development risks and relationships small farmers and ranchers must manage as they seek to develop supplier relationships with restaurants, grocery, wholesale and foodservice buyers.

Farmers have the opportunity to attend one of two sessions this fall: August 16 at KSU and October 20 at Oldham County Extension Office. The cost is \$25 and includes lunch and materials. For more information or to register, contact Kevin Heidemann, Food Systems Innovation Center, at (859) 257-7272 ext. 223 or Kevin.Heidemann@uky.edu.



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Brooks Meats *cont...*

One of the first partnerships for Brooks was with another KCARD client Evans Orchard. Rich initially came to Brooks with the idea of providing a fresh KY Proud pulled pork product for Evans to sell at their orchard café, but Stefan had another idea, an apple-infused pulled pork barbecue.

“I wanted to do something for them, so I put together something together using their apples,” explained Nuemann. “We were looking to find a way for Evans Orchard not just to promote our product but their product as well, and what better way than to combine both.”

“We love the pulled pork! It has been a hit now for two seasons at the café, in fact it has become one of our most popular items,” Jenny Evans said. “We also sell it in two-pound tubs, and many people usually buy some after they try the sandwich.”

The success with the product at Evans Orchard the first year inspired Rich to look for other partners for Brooks, and last year Brooks partnered with Haney’s Appledale Farms in Somerset, Kentucky.

“It has been a great addition to our orchard market,” said Mark Haney. “We also worked with Brooks to make the Haney’s Pulled Pork



Steve Brooks is excited to expand his business by partnering with Kentucky farmers.

available at a local restaurant, and it has been a win-win for both our business and Brooks.”

“Evans Orchard and Haney’s have experienced huge success in



The team at Brooks Meats.

promoting the branded pulled pork product. Hinton’s Orchard tried the pulled pork near the end of their season and it was well received. As with Evans and Haney’s, they plan to expand their use both as a plate lunch item and as a take home retail product. We have identified additional partners to work with in 2012 in the Owensboro and Bowling Green areas that would experience similar benefits provided by this business network alignment which we have named the Kentucky Proud Trail,” explained Laing. “Also Stefan and Steve have developed new products to offer at these venues including cinnamon apple brats and an apple cider infused pork loin.”

KCARD’s work with Brooks doesn’t end with the branded orchard products, Laing is also working with the company to assess the potential to target the Louisville and I-65 south market corridor with their line of over 30 varieties of sausage and other value-added meat products.

“Brooks Meats was established to provide our customers, our neighbors, with a great selection of fresh local meats,” said Steve. “Working with Rich has helped us expand our partnerships with Kentucky producers, and Stefan has been amazing to take those relationships and create unique Kentucky Proud products that set Brooks Meats apart from others in the marketplace.”

Board Development

K CARD offers an array of services to help clients reach their full potential. Whether they are just getting started or have been in operation for many years, KCARD can provide services that are tailored to meet the unique needs of each business.

One of the many services it offers is training and assistance in board development.

The Board of Directors of any organization/business is an important body that plays the key position between member/owners and hired management. A well-functioning Board of Directors is essential for an organization to not only to meet legal requirements, but also to successfully achieve their goals.

In general, boards are instrumental in developing organizational policy, providing oversight to ensure the organization's mission is fulfilled, and keeping the organization financially healthy. Yet, many boards struggle with how to fulfill these duties in a business manner.

Clients can request KCARD's assistance in board training and development to help the board meet their full potential.

KCARD does not have a cookie cutter presentation for board training. KCARD staff will meet with board members and hired management to evaluate the

strengths and weaknesses of the board. From this consultation staff will develop a training plan to address issues facing the board and to meet the needs of the organization.

KCARD staff believes the key to successful board training is working hands on with the organizational board preparing a program that will work to meet their needs

Board training conveys the knowledge and understanding needed in order to be effective as a member of any governing Board of Directors.

Topics KCARD has addressed in previous board trainings include:

- Conflict management
- Bylaws revisions
- Developing a Policy handbook
- Officers – Roles and Responsibilities
- Conducting Board Meetings & Understanding Parliamentary Procedures
- Corporate Records That Must Be Kept & Maintained – General & Financial

Creating a dynamic and productive board that is focused is the first step in moving any organization/business forward. If you are interested in working with KCARD for board training with your organization contact the staff.

New Generation Cooperatives

In the 2012 session House Bill 441 was passed to revise statues to recognize New Generation Cooperatives (NGC) as legal organizational structures for businesses.

The NGC is not a specific legal structure, but rather the term New Generation Cooperative is used to describe how a firm operates. It primarily describes the relationship between the firm and its members and how the firm is financed.

Unlike traditional cooperatives, in which start-up expenses are minimal and growth is financed through members' retained earnings, permanent equity to fund NGC start-up and growth is financed through the sale of delivery rights. These delivery rights represent a member's right to deliver a specific amount of commodities to the cooperative. Members benefit in proportion to their use, and nearly all NGCs are democratically controlled through one member/one vote.

The new legislation simply provides entities the option of adopting the elements of a New Generation Cooperative. Hopefully this new business structure will provide enhanced opportunities for our farmers and foresters in developing bioenergy projects.

For more information on House Bill 441 visit the LRC website www.lrc.ky.gov/record/12RS/HB441.htm.

Changes at GOAP

The Governor's Office of Agricultural Policy has recently made several changes to the procedures and internal structure of the office. The following changes are being adopted by the office.

Applications

In lieu of three project analyst positions, two new positions will be created for processing and reviewing all applications that arrive at GOAP, regardless of county.

- Program Coordinator – the program coordinator will receive, review and process all applications for the county programs (CAIP, Deceased Farm Animal Removal and Shared-Use Equipment) and the Farmers' Market Infrastructure program.
- Project Manager – the project manager will receive, review and process all applications and pre-applications for projects. The project manager will confer with the area contacts as necessary and will present the applications to the board's application review committee.

Area Contacts

To provide greater attention to their constituents and involve additional staff, there will be five Area Contacts to act as a resource for the counties in their areas. These contacts are current staff that are familiar with

all the programs and policies of the KADB and KAFC. A map showing the areas and corresponding contacts can be found at <http://agpolicy.ky.gov/funds/documents/area-contacts.pdf>.

New Faces

Biff Baker comes to GOAP to serve in the new Project Manager role. While he is a new face at GOAP, he is one recognized in Kentucky agriculture. Biff has more than 30 years experience in local, state, and federal government service. Most recently he served the past 20 years as a legislative analyst for the Legislative Research Commission in Frankfort and much of that time was focused on agriculture and natural resource issues.

Tammy Brookshier will serve as the new Program Coordinator at GOAP. Tammy comes to GOAP from the UK Extension Service in Shelby County where she was program administrator for County Agriculture Investment Programs for five years.

Other specific contacts at GOAP remain the same: compliance issues - Kylee Palmer or Bryan Thomas; energy program – Angie Justice; website or press release questions – Sandy Gardner; legislative affairs – Angela Blank; KAFC – Bill McCloskey or Cyndi Hall.

Grant News

Southern United States Trade Association

Provides funds to small business applicants looking to launch a new branded exports through the Market Access Program. The program can cover up to 50% of international marketing and promotion expenses, including tradeshow expenses, in-store displays and label changes. You can download a pre-application form here: http://www.susta.org/services/map_application.html

KY Sheep and Goat Council

The council is offering short term, zero-interest operating loans to individuals looking to begin sheep or goat production or who have been in sheep or goat production for less than 5 years. Funds may be used to purchase sheep and/or goats for breeding purposes as well as livestock guardian animals. The Council is also looking to fund special projects that would either increase the supply of sheep and goats in the state or increase consumption of Kentucky-raised goat and sheep products. Find out more information at <http://www.growkentuckyag.com/programs/KYsheepgoat.html>.

Kentucky Export Initiative

The Kentucky Export Initiative provides up to \$6,000 through the State Trade and Export Promotion program for small businesses to help with covering costs associated with export activities. <http://www.kyexports.com/assistance.aspx>.

ARE YOU READY?

The Value Added Producer Grants will be announced soon, so now is the time to work with KCARD and the Ag Grants Facilitation Program to start planning. For more information on the VAPG and other grant programs visit www.growkentuckyag.com.

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Agriculture and Rural
Development fosters
growth by developing and
delivering technical
assistance and by providing
Business Advisory services
for agricultural and
rural businesses seeking
to enhance their
economic opportunities
in and around the
Commonwealth of Kentucky.*



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To learn more about KCARD visit our web site at
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