

# Agricultural Marketing Resource Center

Report – April 2021 – June 2021

As a condition of its USDA Rural Development grant, the cooperating universities comprising AgMRC were tasked to prepare four reports a year and submit them to USDA. These reports summarize the activities completed during each quarter, including website development and functions, value-added business and economic analysis tools and outreach activities (workshops, seminars, newsletters and WebMail inquiries).

# Agricultural Marketing Resource Center

Report – April 2021 – June 2021

Iowa State University

## *AgMRC Website Statistics*

This period, the total number of page views was 203,215 with an average of 2,234 per day.

The Commodities and Products section attracts the most visits, at 158,254 this period total. Within Commodities and Products, Fruits is the top section at 42,547 visits. Vegetables follows at 31,496 visits. Grains and Oilseeds has the next highest visits at 25,001.

Within the website, the top three topics visited during this quarter were:

1. Rapeseed – 5,878 pageviews
2. Macadamia Nut – 5,761 pageviews
3. Apples – 4,959 pageviews

## AgMRC

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The mission of AgMRC is to continue to provide independent producers and processors with critical information needed to build successful value-added agricultural enterprises through the [www.agmrc.org](http://www.agmrc.org) electronic resource information website.

AgMRC continues to serve a national value-added agriculture audience, with nearly 3,000 unique visits per day.



2020	Pageviews	Page Views Per Day
July	54,865	1,770
August	57,227	1,846
September	67,456	2,249
October	71,066	2,293
November	67,698	2,257
December	57,092	1,842
<b>2021</b>		
January	61,933	1,998
February	65,338	2,108
March	74,621	2,407
April	73,151	2,438
May	71,668	2,312
June	58,396	1,947

## Major Content Sections

The major content sections of the AgMRC website visits:

1. Commodities and Products – 158,254 pageviews
2. Renewable Energy – 14,372 pageviews
3. Business Development – 13,261 pageviews
4. Directories and State Resources – 1,582 pageviews

Within the Commodities and Products section, the top three topics visited during this period were:

1. Fruits – 42,547 pageviews
2. Vegetables – 31,496 pageviews
3. Grains and oilseeds – 25,001pageviews

Within the Renewable Energy Section, the top three topics visited during this period were:

1. Renewable Energy and Climate Change Report – 9,852 pageviews
2. Ethanol – 1,038 pageviews
3. Feedstocks (biofuels)- 724 pageviews

Within the Business Development Section, the top three topics visited during this period were:

1. Value Added Agriculture – 5,459 pageviews
2. Business and Economic Concepts and Principles – 3,093 pageviews
3. Business Management – 1,426 pageviews

*AgMRC Website Updates:*

**Profiles and Pages updated this period (16):**

About Us	<a href="https://www.agmrc.org/about-us">https://www.agmrc.org/about-us</a>
Agritourism	<a href="https://www.agmrc.org/commodities-products/agritourism">https://www.agmrc.org/commodities-products/agritourism</a>
Agritourism Marketing	<a href="https://www.agmrc.org/commodities-products/agritourism/agritourism-marketing">https://www.agmrc.org/commodities-products/agritourism/agritourism-marketing</a>
Best Management Practices in Agritourism	<a href="https://www.agmrc.org/commodities-products/agritourism/best-management-practices-in-agritourism">https://www.agmrc.org/commodities-products/agritourism/best-management-practices-in-agritourism</a>
Business Workbench	<a href="https://www.agmrc.org/business-development/business-workbench">https://www.agmrc.org/business-development/business-workbench</a>
Case Studies of Value Added Producer Grant Recipients	<a href="https://www.agmrc.org/business-development/valueadded-agriculture/case-studies-of-value-added-producer-grant-recipients">https://www.agmrc.org/business-development/valueadded-agriculture/case-studies-of-value-added-producer-grant-recipients</a>
Community Food Systems Curriculum	<a href="https://www.agmrc.org/food/community-food-systems-curriculum">https://www.agmrc.org/food/community-food-systems-curriculum</a>
Covid Resources	<a href="http://www.agmrc.org">www.agmrc.org</a>
DX Beef	<a href="https://www.agmrc.org/business-development/valueadded-agriculture/case-studies-of-value-added-producer-grant-recipients/dx-beef">https://www.agmrc.org/business-development/valueadded-agriculture/case-studies-of-value-added-producer-grant-recipients/dx-beef</a>
Farm to Summer Programs	<a href="https://www.agmrc.org/food/farm-to-school-programs">https://www.agmrc.org/food/farm-to-school-programs</a>
Food Supply Chain Analysis	<a href="https://www.agmrc.org/food/food-supply-chain-analysis">https://www.agmrc.org/food/food-supply-chain-analysis</a>
Midwest Elderberry Cooperative	<a href="https://www.agmrc.org/business-development/valueadded-agriculture/case-studies-of-value-added-producer-grant-recipients/midwest-elderberry-cooperative">https://www.agmrc.org/business-development/valueadded-agriculture/case-studies-of-value-added-producer-grant-recipients/midwest-elderberry-cooperative</a>
Organizations Supporting Agritourism	<a href="https://www.agmrc.org/commodities-products/agritourism/organizations-supporting-agritourism">https://www.agmrc.org/commodities-products/agritourism/organizations-supporting-agritourism</a>
Practitioner and Education Resource Database	<a href="https://www.agmrc.org/food/practitioner-and-education-resource-database">https://www.agmrc.org/food/practitioner-and-education-resource-database</a>
Pivo Brewery	<a href="https://www.agmrc.org/business-development/valueadded-agriculture/case-studies-of-value-added-producer-grant-recipients/pivo-brewery">https://www.agmrc.org/business-development/valueadded-agriculture/case-studies-of-value-added-producer-grant-recipients/pivo-brewery</a>
Risk Management for Specialty Crops	<a href="https://www.agmrc.org/business-development/risk-management-for-specialty-crops">https://www.agmrc.org/business-development/risk-management-for-specialty-crops</a>

Commodities and products profiles are updated based on client inquiries to AgMRC Match participants and AgMRC office staff. This period we continued our streamlining of commodity pages on our website and worked intently at removing pages behind the scenes from the backend of our website that are no longer relevant and linked. Additionally we worked to make the front end of the website more consistent visually, especially in the Value Added Producer Grant Case Studies pages. We ensured that each page had the VAPG information and links at the bottom, that the headers were all uniform, and that website information for each business was also linked, when available.

### **Email**

AgMRC staff researched and responded to 128 e-mailed questions pertaining to wine, ethanol, potatoes, strawberries, and farmer's markets to name a few.

### **Phone Calls**

Between April 1 and June 30, 2021, AgMRC staff reported having 30 toll-free phone inquiries from 13 different states.

### **Facebook**

AgMRC has expanded its public outreach by creating a page on Facebook which has 3,732 followers. During this period the AgMRC Facebook page had 12 posts, which were seen by more than 644 people.

### **YouTube**

The AgMRC YouTube channel added 14 new videos during this period, making the total number of channel videos 93. The channel garnered a total of 1,268 new views for a lifetime total of 10,253. The channel gained 18 new subscribers and now has 102.

### **Specialty Producer Grant Videos**

Twenty videos produced by Model Farm were added to the website:

[Becker Farms](#)

[Blue Heron Orchard](#)

[Brightly Farms](#)

[Country Blossom](#)

[Devine Gardens](#)

[Fair Share Farm](#)

[Finger Lakes Cidery](#)



[Fiore Winery & Distillery](#)

[Groff's Content Farm](#)

[Giofre Apiaries: Honey Ice Cream](#)

[Larson Farms](#)

[Leffel Roots](#)

[Mary's Alpaca](#)

[North Country Creamery](#)

[Oak Spring Farm](#)

[Orchard Point Oyster Company](#)

[Run Amok Maple](#)

[Serenity Acres Farm](#)

[The Frozen Farmer](#)

[Trinity Valley](#)

## **Iowa State University**

### **Modular Produce Processing Cart**

In March of 2021, the project team began working with a capstone course student team in Iowa State University College of Engineering in the Industrial Technology Agricultural Systems Technology programs. Throughout the semester, the ISU Extension project team held meeting with the students to discuss the project history, goals for the semester, and the various outputs to be determined. The semester wrapped up in late May of this year. This capstone course is a year-long course and the ISU Extension project team will continue to work with the student team through the fall semester of 2021.



## Local Food Leader and Community Food Systems Certifications

The September, 2020 virtual Community Food Systems cohort ended in May, 2021. The March, 2021 virtual Local Food Leader cohort ended in July, 2021. The virtual Community Food Systems cohort that began in May, 2021 will complete certification in December, 2021. The next Local Food Leader cohort will run from October, 2021 to February, 2022. Dates are being determined to host the next Community Food Systems certification in Spring 2022. A Local Food Leader trainer cohort meeting was held in June, 2021 for existing trainers to network and give updates on their LFL trainings. The next Local Food Leader train the trainer will be held in February, 2022 for new and existing trainers. Evaluation reports for the 2020 virtual Local Food Leader and Community Food Systems trainings will be available soon.

## Sustaining the Iowa Farm to Summer Campaign: Institutionalizing Sponsor Participation and Local Producer Support

Iowa Farm to Summer Campaign partners (ISU FFED, Iowa Department of Education, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, and FoodCorps Iowa) successfully planned and implemented the [2021 Iowa Farm to Summer Campaign, "Kick It With Carrots!"](#) Since 2018, we've seen an increase in applications from new organizations interested in participating and a large number of organizations applying to participate again. The 2021 Iowa Farm to Summer Campaign confirmed this increasing interest again (Table 1).

**Table 1. Annual Iowa Farm to Summer Campaign Figures**

Campaign Year	# of Participating Sites	Dollars Awarded	Youth Reached
2018	13 sites	\$1,950	760 youth reached
2019	25 sites	\$3,750	1,850 youth reached
2020	43 sites	\$6,2500	13,083 youth reached
2021	85 sites	\$14,800	8,047 youth reached



In May 2021, a total of 85 partners including school districts, early learning sites, and community partners hosting summer meal programs were funded to participate. Mini-grants of \$200 totaling \$14,800 were awarded to these partners across the state. To meet growing interest and community need in light of the pandemic, partners collectively raised funds to award additional sites. Funding for the 2021 campaign came from ISU Extension and Outreach FFED, FoodCorps Iowa, and the Iowa Association for the Education of Young Children. In addition, the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship supplied awardees with promotional materials, including posters, banners, and an editable community newsletter. A survey collecting feedback from participating sites will be sent August 2021 and will inform a final report, to be complete by the end of September 2021.

Partners had planned to transition the program to be hosted by the Iowa Department of Education (IDOE) in 2022. However, recent staffing changes have decreased the capacity of the IDOE to host the program next year. We will continue conversation about transitioning and institutionalizing the program within IDOE in the future as staff capacity allows, and in the meantime, continue to develop resources and transition tools that will be included in the "Farm to Summer Toolkit: Tools and Best Practices for Program Delivery," to be posted on the AgMRC website this winter. This resource will cover the timeline, themed promotional materials, partnership opportunities, financing, and standard operating procedures we recommended from hosting five years of farm to summer campaigns for a national audience. The Iowa Farm to School and Early Care Coalition will support Campaign partners in editing and finalizing the toolkit.

### **Sustaining Strategy and Partnerships: Iowa Farm to School & Early Care Coalition**

Since June 2020, the Iowa Farm to School and Early Care Coalition has met consistently for bi-monthly, virtual meetings. Three co-chairs continue to facilitate communication and meeting logistics, and five strategy team coordinators facilitate meetings for three strategy teams (Network Development, Local Procurement, and Food Education). An output of this grant, the first [Iowa Farm to School and Early Care Coalition Annual Report](#) was completed in October 2020 and a second annual report is set to be released October 2021. Some initial data to be included in the 2020-2021 report is detailed here.





Topic	Coalition Impacts, School Year 2020-2021
<b>Broad Participation</b>	More than 250,000 children and youth at 1,110 schools and early care sites participate in Iowa Farm to School and Early Care initiatives
<b>Local Procurement</b>	434 school districts and early care sites procure local food for meal programs
<b>Statewide Events</b>	In spite of COVID-19, 61 school districts in 35 counties participated in 2020 Iowa Local Food Day, serving 51,500 meals featuring local foods.
<b>Markets for Local Farmers</b>	Schools and early care sites purchased more than \$500,000 in local foods.
<b>Funding Attained</b>	Iowa F2S and ECE programs were awarded more than \$800,000 in grant funds to support statewide work.
<b>Procurement Partnerships</b>	Seven food hubs sold \$228,000 to schools, early care and colleges in 2020-2021.
<b>COVID-19 Support</b>	The coalition provided one-to-one technical assistance and created a <a href="#">web-based interactive list</a> of resources for schools and early care sites facing COVID-19 challenges.

With the support of a communications intern, [the Iowa Farm to School and Early Care Coalition website](#) now exists. This website serves as a one-stop resource hub for the Iowa Farm to School and Early Care Network and is continually evolving alongside statewide projects and partnerships. In June of 2021, we hosted the 2021 Virtual Iowa Farm to School and Early Care Conference via this website. Over 150 stakeholders from across the state participated in the livestream, and now, all presentations and resources are archived on the website.

In January 2021, we hosted the first Annual Coalition Member Survey to gauge perspective and feedback around members' first full year of coalition involvement. The results of this survey were used to define our 2021 strategic planning processes, and we expect this survey and evaluation to take place annually. The systems and templates supporting the Annual Report and Annual Survey will be



included in the output, "Best Practices for Farm to School and Early Care Coalition Development," to be posted on the AgMRC website this winter.

### **Extension's Role in Supporting Resilient Community Food Systems**

A total of 66 interviews have been completed and 12 focus groups (additional focus groups will be held in Alaska August 18-21). A survey has been developed in English and Spanish to be shared in early August and will be open for at least one month. The survey requests information for individuals who are over the age of 18 and make food purchasing decisions. It also requests information related to community involvement and impact of COVID and place-based natural disasters. In September, findings will be turned into snapshots for all communities and additional analysis publications will be on AgMRC by late fall 2021.

- Arkansas: one focus groups (6 participants - February); 14 interviews conducted
- Iowa: two focus groups (6 participants- March); 21 interviews conducted
- Virgin Islands: four focus groups (20 participants- May; 13 interviews conducted
- Texas: five focus groups (12 participant- June); 17 interviews conducted
- Alaska; 7 focus groups scheduled in August; 7 interviews conducted- will continue snowball

### **Geospatial Technology Program**

The Community and Economic Development Program's Geospatial Technology Program completed 5 new reports for the AgMRC Mini Report Generator – wine, bees/honey, cheese/dairy, lettuce and pastured pork. Slight revisions to the report designs are being made for bees/honey, lettuce and wine, but all will be live here:

<https://indicators.extension.iastate.edu/projects/CommodityReport/>

Since the reports have been made live, the following numbers have been downloaded:

- Apples 115
- Tomatoes 133
- Potatoes 33
- Grapes 71
- Pork 3
- Strawberries 104
- Cheese 44

Plans are underway to update statistics in the current report, update demographic information from the most current census numbers and for four new reports to be generated during 2021-22.

## AgMRC Subcontracts

### Progress Report on AgMRC MarketMaker Collaboration

#### Task 1 Food Searcher Program - Enhancements and Expansions

Testing and improvements continued for the new version of the MarketMaker Registration that was released last quarter and features value added products. Data filters are under development for the new IT baseline for the 28 original plugins. Examples of the filter functionality are listed below for commodity and business type plug ins.

##### Commodity Plug Ins

Use the following For All Commodity Plug Ins-

*Filters:*

- Methods of Sale
- Certifications
- Online Store

*Additional Commodity Specific Filters:*

- *Beef, Pork, Lamb, and Goats – Breed*
- *Add Cheese and Milk and Dairy Products – Filter by Cow, Goat, Sheep*

*Search Results:*

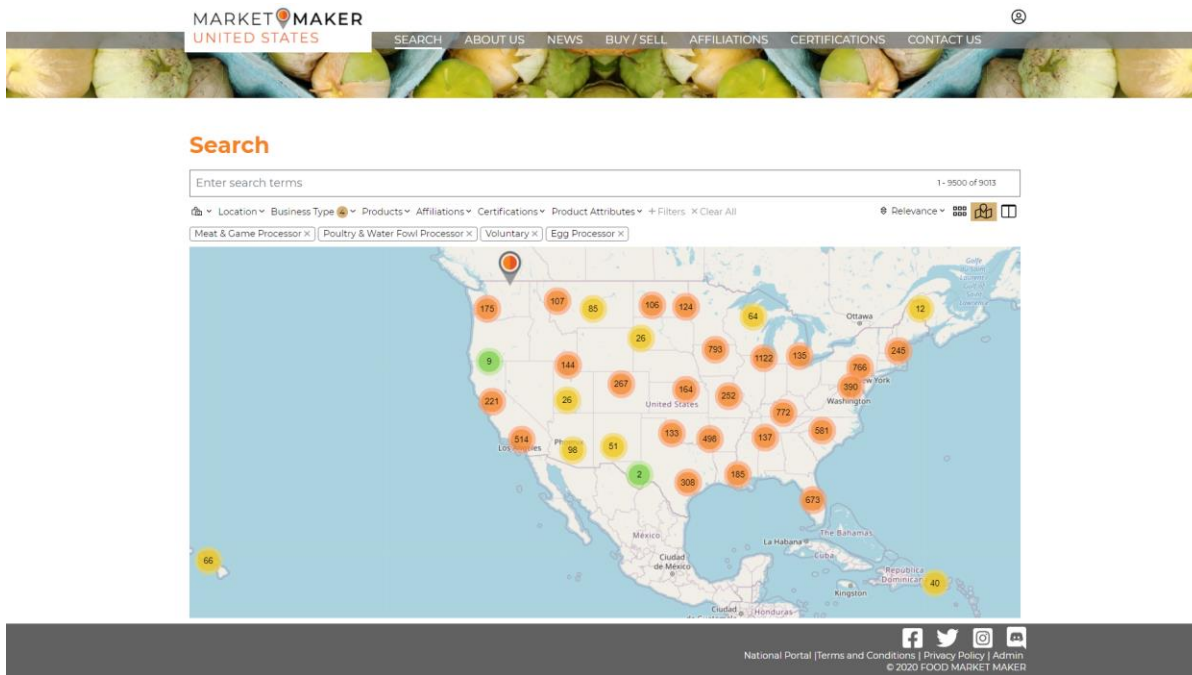
- Ability to limit list results from current map boundaries. Results from within current map boundaries should also include the original query parameters (filters) assigned by the user.
- Individual search listing includes affiliation and Shop Now option.

##### Business Type Plug Ins

*Meat, Poultry, and Egg Processors*

We merged all federal and state inspected meat, poultry and egg processing plants in the United States into the MarketMaker database, deleted duplicates, so that we can map by inspection type. We downloaded the federal plants from USDA-FSIS site, while contacting all 27 states that have state meat

inspection to request their current processor list. All 27 states cooperated. We developed FoodSearcher plug-ins for Meat Processors, Poultry Processors, and Egg Processors that went live in July 2021.



### Filters:

- Certifications
- Methods of Sales
- Services (pull services out of what is now listed under product types)
- Online Store

### Search Results:

- Ability to limit list results from current map boundaries. Results from within current map boundaries should also include the original query parameters (filters) assigned by the user.
- Individual search listing includes affiliation and Shop Now option.

### Agritourism

*Filters:* To be determined by Agritourism working group lead by Dr Dave Lamie and Clemson and Christine Kostelecky of PASA.

This reporting period (April 2021) started with the launch of a new MarketMaker platform. As a result, we were unable to capture FoodSearcher searches for the first two months.

During the month of June 2021, AgMRC users performed 15,045 product/ business searches, averaging 3,510 searches per week. The top 5 commodity searches were:

1. Cherries 361 searches per week



2. Apples 326 searches per week
3. Agri-tourism 306 searches per week
4. Watermelon 299 searches per week
5. Strawberries 247 searches per week

New commodities to be added this quarter: peaches, onions, muskmelons, and sweet potatoes.

Outreach: Outreach is challenging with Covid restrictions and launch of the new platform, however we did spend this time preparing for tradeshow and outreach. We sent out a May Newsletter that was all about encouraging MarketMaker profile owners to claim their profiles, we are preparing a marketing campaign with United Fresh/ PMA starting in August, and we are preparing for tradeshow in July, August, October, November, and December.

### **Task 2 Interactive Mapping Tools for Researchers, Classroom Instruction, and Technical Assistant Providers**

The new data source and model for mapping was developed that includes a geospatially aware search engine (Elastic Search) that enables detailed searches using a combination of text/fuzzy search, geospatial search, temporal search and attribute searches

The MapBoxGL license was tested and acquired. The software is necessary to build rich, interactive maps in Javascript.

John Bauer is working with Courtney Long (Iowa State University) on determining appropriate agricultural data sets and mapping features to be integrated into the new mapping tool. We also are developing synergies in outreach and engagement efforts with Courtney Long and her AgMRC project. This quarter has been focused on the new platform, but Interactive Mapping Tools will be a focus of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter, 2021.

### **Task 3 AgMRC/ MarketMaker Data and Content Integration**

We have developed a new data model with over 3,000 products. Each product has an optional field for an AgMRC description and link. This will be further populated and then become apparent in a mouse hover or on a product details page on the AgMRC website.

Detailed descriptions of product attributes were developed in 20 categories. These descriptions will greatly enhance the definitions and details for food businesses and products available to AgMRC users. In the area of adding a "learn more" feature to MarketMaker, researched and defined 20 various categories pertaining to certifications, attributes, products and production. The definitions are intended to be educational to all parties; consumers interested in making purchases of products and



farmers/ranchers with a desire to change/grow their businesses in these areas. During this three month reporting period, we imported the data on 6,575 federally inspected meat, poultry and/or egg processing plants. In addition, we uploaded the data of state inspected meat and poultry plants from the 27 states with state inspection. With this comes the opportunity to search and sort for business attributes such as inspection type, species and business types, and brings with it the opportunity to educate the user on all of these meat and poultry business attributes.

This work was in preparation for building AgMRC plug-ins, representing MarketMaker and AgMRC at the American Association of Meat Processors TradeShow, and a MarketMaker Newsletter rolling out the new effort, all of which will be reported on in the next quarters report. We also updated the article “Pork Processing” from the AgMRC site to use on the MarketMaker site to compliment the processor data.

#### **Task 4 E- Commerce Support to Farmers**

The Food Searcher MarketMaker platform was developed to embed e-commerce capability in user profiles. In collaboration with an e-commerce partner, Food4All, to and focus group sessions and surveys were conducted help inform and prioritize the business-to-business needs and interests related to transactional capability.

As part of the Planning Committee for the National Ag Marketing Summit we have developed a session in October’s meeting entitled “Marketing Innovation and Technology.”

The session highlights the technological adaptations and advancements in direct marketing. Topics will address strategies to pivot online, maintaining an online presence, online sales platforms, and leveraging social media. Speakers will include MarketMaker partners Illinois MarketMaker Partner Raghela Scavuzzo and Food4All CEO Kami Semick speaking on “Creating Functional Online Marketing and Sales Food Networks”.

We are working to help farmers and other food business build out their e-commerce profiles. Once we have built out a significant number of ecommerce stores we will launch more “Shop Now” buttons throughout the site.

## **University of Vermont**

#### **Work Plan and Deliverables**

The overall goal is to improve the viability of farms and ranches through research-based tools, resources, and technical assistance that promote best practices for agritourism and value-added enterprises. The project builds on past deliverables funded by AgMRC as well as new research, data



analysis, and resources to provide support for producers and agricultural service providers in the Northeast and throughout the U.S. Deliverables include:

**1) Publications** for producers, agricultural service providers, and researchers. During the past three months, we continued to analyze and summarize data from a national survey of farms and ranches open to visitors for experiences and direct sales. We continued to build the inventory of publications for a variety of audiences including producers, agricultural service providers, policymakers, and researchers. The current inventory is listed below:

- a. Reports and summaries developed from national survey data of farms and ranches open to visitors for experiences and product sales. The following items were published on the project website, linked here: <https://www.uvm.edu/vtrc/agritourism-survey>
  - i. Three full data analysis reports, including national quantitative and qualitative data, and Vermont quantitative data.
    1. US Survey Report
    2. US Interview Report
    3. Vermont Survey Report
  - ii. Eleven summary reports were developed: seven using the data from the national survey, and four using data from Vermont respondents. The purpose of these summaries is to provide overviews of the important findings from the study that are accessible to lay audiences.
    1. US Overview
    2. US Motivations
    3. US Challenges
    4. US Supports Needed
    5. US Revenue & Profitability
    6. US Regional Summary
    7. US and VT Comparison Summary
    8. VT Overview
    9. VT Motivations
    10. VT Challenges
    11. VT Supports Needed
- b. Two published articles, including:
  - i. Quella, L., Chase, L., Conner, D., Reynolds, T., Wang, W., & Singh-Knights, D. (2021). Visitors and values: A qualitative analysis of agritourism operator motivations across the U.S. *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development*, 10(3), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.5304/jafscd.2021.103.010>
  - ii. Lamie, R. D., Chase, L., Chiodo, E., Dickes, L., Flanigan, S., Schmidt, C., & Streifeneder, T. (2021). Agritourism around the globe: Definitions, authenticity,





and potential controversy. *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development*, 10(2), 1–5. <https://doi.org/10.5304/jafscd.2021.102.002>

- c. Three publications in progress:
  - i. Challenges in Agritourism and Access to resources: A US regional analysis. Lead Author: Weiwei Wang; Co-authors: Lisa Chase, David Conner, Jane Kolodinsky, Dee Singh-Knights.
  - ii. Factors related to profitability of agritourism in the United States: Results from a national survey of operators. Lead Author: Chadley Hollas; Co-authors: Lisa Chase, David Conner, Lori Dickes, David Lamie, Dee Singh-Knights, Lindsay Quella.
  - iii. Farm Attributes and Perceived Success in Agritourism: Results from a National Study. Lead Author: Lindsay Quella; Co-authors: Lisa Chase, David Conner, Travis Reynolds.

We also created outreach materials specifically for producers:

1. Best Management Practices for Farms Open to Visitors During the COVID-19 Pandemic online at [https://www.uvm.edu/sites/default/files/Vermont-Agritourism-Collaborative/COVID-19\\_guidelines\\_for\\_agritourism\\_1.9.2021.pdf](https://www.uvm.edu/sites/default/files/Vermont-Agritourism-Collaborative/COVID-19_guidelines_for_agritourism_1.9.2021.pdf)
2. Vermont Act No. 31 of 2021: An Act Relating to Limiting Liability for Agritourism online at [https://www.uvm.edu/sites/default/files/Agriculture/Agritourism/Act\\_31.pdf](https://www.uvm.edu/sites/default/files/Agriculture/Agritourism/Act_31.pdf)

**2) Trainings to share best practices, decision aids, tools, and resources** with a focus on marketing, value added enterprises, agritourism and direct sales. During the first year of the grant, we were not able to host in-person trainings so we organized two webinar series for producers, agricultural service providers, and others working with agritourism and value-added enterprises.

Agritourism gatherings: A virtual series for farm, food, and travel communities. Webinar series, September 2020 – May 2021. <https://www.agritourismworkshop.com/gatherings.html>

Total of 1704 unique registrants representing 66 countries.

1. September 22, 2020, Welcoming Guests Back on our Farms and Ranches, 221 registered representing 27 countries, 98 attended representing 14 countries.
2. October 8, 2020, Regenerative Tourism & Agriculture, 308 registered representing 27 countries, 159 attended representing 19 countries.
3. November 19, 2020, Indigenous and Tribal Perspectives on Agritourism, 386 people registered representing 32 countries, 185 attended representing 18 countries.
4. December 9, 2020, Creating Virtual Farm and Food Experiences, 507 registered representing 26 countries, 255 attended representing 14 countries.
5. January 13, 2021, Farm-Based Education in Every City and Town: 4 Unique Stories, 310 registered representing 25 countries, 173 attended representing 15 countries.





6. February 17, 2021, Agritourism within the US Racial Justice movement, 440 registered representing 19 countries, 246 attended representing 13 countries.
7. March 16, 2021, Exploring the Diversity and Impact of Agritourism in Southern Africa, 172 registered representing 26 countries, 73 attended representing 17 countries.
8. April 20, 2021, Culinary Lens on Agritourism, 361 registered representing 34 countries, 185 attended representing 18 countries.
9. May 11, 2021, Regional Strategies for Promoting Agritourism and Community Economic Development, 375 registered representing 38 countries, 198 attended representing 25 countries.

Safety and Liability for Farms Open to Visitors during COVID-19. Webinar series May 2021 – September 2022. <https://www.uvm.edu/extension/vtagritourism/safety-and-liability-farms-during-covid-19>

1. May 4, 2021, Getting Ready for Pick Your Own – Do's and Don'ts for the Upcoming Season, 103 registered, 63 attended.
2. May 11, 2021, Agritourism Operation Checklists and Self-Assessment, 51 registered, 29 attended.
3. May 18, 2021, Crisis Management and Communications for Farms Open to Visitors, 34 registered, 17 attended.
4. May 25, 2021, Liability Insurance for Farms Open to Visitors, 40 registered, 18 attended.
5. June 1, 2021, Cultivating Farm and Food Safety for Visitors -- Guided Video Tours of Two Farms, 38 registered, 21 attended.
6. June 15, 2021, Farm Tours and Overnight Stays, 37 registered, 26 attended.
7. June 29, 2021, Growing Farm-Based Education in a Post-Covid World, 47 registered, 26 attended.
8. July 1, 2021, Ask the Experts: Farm Agritourism Risk Management Tips, 15 registered, 7 attended.

**3) Presentations at workshops and conferences** to share new and existing tools. During the past year, we presented research, tools and resources for producers and agricultural service providers at workshops and conferences. Because of COVID-19 travel restrictions, all presentations during the past year were virtual.

1. Hollas, C., L.C. Chase, D. Lamie. Agritourism and Community: Findings from a National Survey on Agritourism. Peer reviewed presentation, Community Development Society Annual Conference (virtual), July 12-15, 2021.
2. Conner, D., L.C. Chase. Critical Success Factors for Agritourism: Results of a National Survey. Peer reviewed presentation, Annual Joint Conference of the Association for the Study of Food and Society (ASFS); Agriculture, Food, and Human Values Society (AFHVS); Canadian Association for Food Studies (CAFS); the Society for the Anthropology of Food



- and Nutrition (SAFN), and hosted by the Culinary Institute of America & New York University (virtual), June 9-15, 2021.
3. Chase, L.C. Taking Your Agritourism Enterprise to the Next Level. Invited presentation. Organized by the Washington Tourism Alliance and Washington State Department of Agriculture (virtual), June 14, 2021. 218 registered, 124 participants.
  4. Chase, L.C. Congressional Briefing on Agritourism. Invited presentation, Organized by the University of Vermont and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO North America) with support from the Office of U.S. Senator Patrick Leahy (virtual), June 3, 2021. 288 registered, 142 participants.
  5. Chase, L.C., Schmidt, C., and Hollas, C. Agritourism Development and Research in the USA. Invited presentation. Rural Women Sustainable Entrepreneurship Opportunities through Agri Tourism, International Conference on Agri Tourism hosted by Agri Tourism India, World Agri Tourism Day (virtual), May 15, 2021.
  6. Chase, L.C., Hollas, C., Quella, L., Lamie, D., and Singh-Knights, D. Agritourism Success Factors for Entrepreneurship and Community Development. Peer reviewed presentation. National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals (NACDEP) Conference, April 21, 2021. 40 participants.
  7. Singh-Knights, D., L.C. Chase, and P. Leff. Critical Success Factors for Small and Medium-Sized Farms with Direct Sales and Agritourism – Results from a National Study. Peer-reviewed poster presentation. Extension Risk Management Education (ERME) Center Conference (virtual), March 24, 2021.
  8. Opening Your Farm to Visitors and Controlling for Liability. Conservation Law Foundation Legal Food Hub Webinar. March 9, 2021. 113 registered, 62 attended.
  9. Chase, L., Singh-Knights, D., Wang, W., Leff, P. Challenges and Resources for Agritourism Operators: Findings from a national survey. Invited presentation (virtual), North American Farmers' Direct Marketing Association (NAFDMA) International Agritourism Association, February 4, 2021.
  10. Chase, L.C. Agritourism as Economic Development. Invited presentation, Vermont House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development (virtual), February 2, 2021.
  11. Agritourism around the US: Findings from a National Survey of Farms Open to Visitors for Education, Entertainment, Recreation, Hospitality and Product Sales. National Extension Tourism Network Webinar. January 28, 2021. 313 registered, 196 attended.
  12. Chase, L.C., E. Buckwalter, and A. Matthews. Future of Direct Sales: Securing Strong Foundations and Nurturing New Beginnings. Invited presentation, Vermont Farm to Plate Gathering (virtual), November 13, 2020.
  13. Chase, L.C., T.C Lane, and L. Redhouse. Building Tourism into Tribal Agricultural Programs. Invited presentation, Webinar hosted by the American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association (AIANTA), October 29, 2020. 150 registered, 76 participants.

14. Wang, W., and L.C. Chase. Access to Resources for Agritourism Operators in the US: A Regional View. Peer reviewed presentation. FoodTreX Food Travel Research Summit (virtual) hosted by the World Food Travel Association, October 16, 2020.

**4) One-on-one technical assistance** to support producers with agritourism, direct sales, and value-added enterprises. During the first nine months of the grant, we were limited to virtual technical assistance due to COVID-19 travel restrictions. Through videoconferences (Zoom, FaceTime and Teams), phone calls, texts, and emails, we provided one-on-one consultations to 43 different farms, many having multiple exchanges. These farms were located primarily in Vermont and nearby states in the Northeast. During the past three months of the grant (April – June 2021), COVID-19 travel restrictions eased and we were able to conduct 19 farm visits across three states (Maine, Vermont, and New Hampshire). During these farm visits, we discussed challenges, barriers, and improvements needed regarding marketing, safety and liability for agritourism operations.

## University of Arkansas

The project launched a promotional campaign called Experience Arkansas Agriculture. A one-day premier was hosted in Little Rock in late April to a select group of Arkansas Agricultural stakeholders including the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture, Arkansas Farm Bureau and Arkansas Agriculture Department. The promotional campaign connects consumers with local farms, markets, and agritourism destinations highlighting value-added products including locally grown brand. Using television and relevant social media platforms, we are able to reach a younger demographic, and potentially new audience, with fresh content that focuses less on the technical aspects of agriculture and more on the tangible impact it has for the everyday consumer.

The first four video installments of Experience Arkansas Agriculture have launched, with additional segments scheduled for development and release during the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter. Each segment features value-added agriculture products/services and details ways for consumers to connect and support the agricultural sector, food value chain. Content highlights and relevant data regarding each of the first four installments is provided below.



Topic	Release Date	Featured
Arkansas Berries	5/12/2021	Wye Mountain Flowers and Berries
		ZAZA Restaurant
Eggs	5/26/2021	Gum Thicket Farms
		Roots Café
Vet Veggies	6/7/2021	Vet Veggies
		Eleven at Crystal Bridges Museum
UA Local Foods	6/23/2021	U of A Bumpers College of Ag
		U of A Food Service

#### **Paid Reach, Television (KATV)**

- Placement, “Good Morning Arkansas”
- Average of 32.6k Impressions for Households
- Average of 27,000 Viewers Age 25+
- 130,400 Estimated Impressions for Households
- 108,000 Estimated Viewers Age 25+

#### **Paid Reach, Facebook via KATV**

- Impressions: 400,059
- Reach: 177,187
- Link Clicks: 5,586

The project also launched an Experience Arkansas Agriculture webpage, [www.aragex.uada.edu](http://www.aragex.uada.edu) and a collection of social media activities. The link to the interactive site is [Experience Arkansas Agriculture | Arkansas agriculture as an industry \(uada.edu\)](http://www.aragex.uada.edu) details the numerous ways to connect with Arkansas agriculture along with links to our social media efforts to drive consumer engagement. Assessment of our engagement and impacts to date are detailed below.

#### **Paid Reach, Experience Arkansas Agriculture Page**

- Paid Impressions: 113,400
- Paid Reach: 95,600

\*May 1-July 31. Represents six installments as they performed across two paid Facebook Ads.

#### **Organic Reach, Experience Arkansas Agriculture Pages**

- Facebook Reach: 23,186
- Instagram Reach: 415

### **Content Performance**

Highest ranking content: *Arkansas Berries* released May 12 featuring Wye Mountain and ZAZA.

- 184 Reactions
- 32 Shares
- 815 Link Clicks

### **Partner Reach**

Host Logan Duvall, Owner of Me & McGee Market, has helped promote via their market's social for a total of 8 posts ranging from April 30-June 30.

- FB Reach: 36,700
- FB Views: 18,000
- FB Engagement: 882
- Instagram Reach: 5,531

### **Key Demographics**

- Facebook Audience:
  - 66.7% Female
  - 33.3% Male
  - Largest segment being women ages 35-44, 20% of total audience
- Instagram Audience:
  - 80.5% Female
  - 19.5% Male
  - Largest segment being women ages 25-34, over 30% of total audience

Lastly, tentative plans are underway to host a face-to-face training in Little Rock on Sept. 16<sup>th</sup>. Those plans will feature strategic engagement tactics and social media engagement examples to enhance Arkansas marketing efforts

## **University of Minnesota**

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### **Video Seminars conducted by University of Minnesota Crookston**

The University of Minnesota Crookston has developed a set of videos to explain the impact on global supply chains due to COVID-19. We have spent the past year making these videos and distributing them to commodity groups, schools, and social media outlets like LinkedIn and Facebook. Two newly created videos entitled "Supply Chain Shocks," and "Creating a More Resilient Midwest," educate the public, students as well as industry on supply chain shortages. Specifically, a container shortage video and panel was recorded to provide unique, private sector insight, into how the supply shortage of



shipping containers has impacted the agricultural industry. Most importantly, lessons learned were shared to assist producers with deploying unconventional ideas to mitigate their exposure to loss.

The other videos produced earlier talk about the large and small scale impacts on different industries since the pandemic occurred. Cumulative viewing numbers are shown in parenthesis in the information below and views during the quarter are shown at the end of each line.

With this group of existing videos, there is a specific month made for each industry such as meat, eggs, corn, dairy, and fresh produce. Our group has come up with a monthly calendar to distribute each set of videos that corresponds with the industry. For the month of June, we chose to do the videos based on the meat supply chain since it is Dairy Month. An email talking about these goes out to the respective state and national commodity groups (i.e. Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, Cattlemen's Associations, etc. and the National Cattlemen's Beef Association )

During the month of April, we had not begun promoting the Supply Chain videos yet. In the Month of May, we began to promote Beef Month and the video that correlated with that timeframe. On the University of Minnesota Crookston's YouTube Channel, our supply chain video: Meat Supply Chains reached 377 views. Along with this video that was promoted during the month, we also had links to reach all other videos associated with the supply chain series.

In the month of June, we worked on boosting the content we had for June Dairy Month. We posted the supply chain and demand videos that correlated with Dairy Month on Facebook and LinkedIn. Supply chain video 7: Dairy Supply Chains. This video alone reached 337 views on YouTube. Videos 1-3 also reached 541 views on the first video, 333 views on the second video, and 300 views on the third video. Overall, promoting June Dairy Month through the supply chain video series has been very beneficial.

Overall, the views on all of the videos have been growing with the help of promoting each video that goes along with the month. August will be promoting Corn/Ethanol and we hope to boost these numbers even more.

- Videos 1 -3 --Fundamentals of supply chains (1,174views) 14
- Video 4 --Meat supply chains (377 views) 11
- Video 4b-Meat supply chains in Spanish (4 views) 3
- Video 5 --Eggs supply chains (24 views) 3
- Video 6 --Corn and Ethanol supply chains (167 views) 4
- Video 7 -- Dairy supply chains (337 views) 9



- Video 7b—Dairy supply chains in Spanish (3 views) 1
- Video 8 -- Fresh Produce supply chains (256 views) 14
- Video 8b-- Fresh Produce supply chains in Spanish (3 views) 1
- Video 9 -- Shipping and the supply chain implications (125 views) 4
- Video 10 – Restaurants and the supply chain implications (123 views) 9
- Video 11 -- Food Banks and the supply chain implications (96 views) 1
- Video 12 --Local Markets and the supply chain implications (128 views) 5
- Video 13 --Halal and Kosher Markets and the supply chain implications (71 views) 3
- Video 14-- Human Capital (125 views) 6
- Video 15--Long-Term Food Supply Chain Trends (18 views) 7
- Video 16--Long-Term Food Supply Chain Trends (9 views) 5
- Video 17-- ESG Impact on the Food Supply Chain (4 views) 2
- Video 18-- Food Supply Chain Shocks (10 views) 4
- Video 19 Supply Chain Shocks (10 views) 10
- Video 20 - Creating a More Resilient Midwest (1 view) 1

### **Work with Under-represented producer groups**

Simultaneous to completing the video content and panels, we worked very closely with Minnesotans of East African origin to develop new business concepts that have a rural-urban nexus and provide more enhanced food security for groups with unique dietary needs. For example, we worked with the Rising Nomads group on developing a business plan for a potential Halal food processing operation focused on meat production and reduction in logistics costs. This would improve rural agricultural economics through higher premiums yet reduce costs for consumers given major reductions in global supply chain movements. We will continue to work with this group and others on developing business plans that enhance rural economic agricultural growth prospects.

### **Profiles of past recipients of the Value Added Agriculture Program (VAPG)**



For many entrepreneurs and farmers across the country, the Value Added Producer Grant program has been a critical source for sustaining and growing their businesses. The profiles of past recipients of the Value Added Agriculture Program (VAPG) were interviewed to determine how they used their grant and the impact it has had on their business. Several themes emerged about the VAPG program being an important tool for them.

- It was key to have support and an open phone line with staff at USDA Rural Development.
- The flexibility of the program, especially during the pandemic, made all the difference.

Detailed interviews of the recipients are on the AgMRC website. This summary was provided earlier but technically should have been reported in the quarterly report.

Gary and Amy Blase each grew up on dairy farms and started their married life with a dairy of their own in 1972. Their son, Chad Blase, and his partner Laura Klock, came on board a few years ago to help the family farm adapt to the changing dairy industry. Chad and Laura founded Farm Life Creamery in Ethan, South Dakota, and grew their artisan cheese and milk bottling business through the ups and downs of the pandemic.