

AgMRC COVID Report

January 2023 – March 2023

Iowa State University

AgMRC Website Statistics

This period, the total number of page views was a total of 589,900 with an average of 6,554 per day.

The Commodities and Products section attracts the most visits, at 584,230 this period total. Within Commodities and Products, Fruits is the top section at 126,551 visits. Vegetables follows at 101,451 visits. Grains and Oilseeds has the next highest visits at 97,824.

Within the website, the top topics visited during this quarter, shown by page views were:

1. Rapeseed 14,612
2. Macadamia nuts 11,148
3. Apples 9,655
4. Potatoes 9,617
5. Rabbits 8,630
6. Dragon Fruit 8,028
7. Poultry 7,917
8. Strawberries 7,910
9. Sweet Corn 7,152
10. Lettuce 7,125

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
2021		
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
July	56,628	1,827
August	58,722	1,894
September	62,632	2,088
October	70,929	2,288
November	72,936	2,431
December	56,617	1,826
2022		

January	67,178	2,167
February	63,074	2,253
March	72,289	2,332
April	176,305	5,876
May	187,113	6,035
June	171,675	5,722
July	172,103	5,551
August	169,477	5,467
September	183,550	6,118
October	190,060	6,130
November	187,784	6,259
December	161,853	5,221
2023		
January	173,237	5,588
February	190,849	6,816
March	225,814	7,284

Major Content Sections

The major content sections of the AgMRC website visits:

1. Commodities and Products – 584,230 pageviews
2. Renewable Energy – 88,903 pageviews
3. Business Development – 78,987 pageviews
4. Media Room – 47,612 pageviews

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

1. Fruits – 126,551 pageviews
2. Vegetables – 101,451 pageviews
3. Grains and oilseeds – 97,824 pageviews

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

1. Renewable Energy and Climate Change Report – 88,903 pageviews
2. Ethanol – 13,785 pageviews
3. AgMRC Renewable Energy Newsletter – 2,188 pageviews

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

1. Value Added Agriculture – 26,642 pageviews
2. Business and Economic Concepts and Principles – 12,643 pageviews
3. Business Workbench – 11,603 pageviews

AgMRC Website Updates:

Profiles and Pages updated this period (27):

Business Development link updates
Cappadona Ranch
Celery
Community Food Systems Tactics videos
Eggplant
Food Systems Database
Golden Farms
Herbs
Homepage – Facebook & YouTube links in header
J Berry Nursery
Local/Regional Foods
Pears
Maple Syrup
Mesquite Field Farm
Mushrooms
Mustard
One Up Mushroom Products
Peppers
Plums
Raspberries
Resilient Food Systems
Rye
School Bus Farm
Spinach
Texas Olive Ranch
Wheat
Yahweh's Farm

Commodities and products profiles are updated based on client inquiries to AgMRC Match participants and AgMRC office staff, and available USDA data. This period we reviewed active webpages for relevancy, consistent formatting, and broken links, particularly in static descriptive pages where the information does not need updating, but does need to be reviewed.

Email

AgMRC staff researched and responded to 84 e-mailed questions pertaining updating value-added provider listings, business development, urban farming, and organic crops, among many other topics.

Phone Calls

January 1st and March 31st, AgMRC staff reported having 31 toll-free phone inquiries from 10 different states.

Facebook

AgMRC's Facebook page has garnered a total of 3,900 followers. During this period the AgMRC Facebook page had 15 posts, which were seen by more than 1,303 people.

YouTube

The AgMRC YouTube channel continued promotion of the VAPG videos this period, with 2,9320 views, and has a lifetime total of 26,225 views. There are a total of 106 VAPG videos now highlighting case studies across the country. The channel now has 257 subscribers.

Project 1. Extension's Role in Supporting Resilient Community Food Systems

Following action planning sessions that wrapped up in December, each partner organization met with our team and determined which priority they would dedicate time to in the remaining months of the project.

Kenai Peninsula, Alaska: support local and statewide food policy council development. This will involve facilitating food policy and taskforce discussions with the new Ag Program at the Community College in Homer, Alaska. In addition, a literature and case study review on needs policy councils and networks at the state-wide level, building off of needs for the continuation of network development.

Benton and Washington County, Arkansas: understand and assess opportunities and limitations around farm to school and local food procurement, including understanding the interest of both supply and demand aspects related to local food procurement in the school setting, including convening meetings of farmers and food purchasers to identify existing needs and interest for local food purchasing and scaling of agricultural production.

Marshall County, Iowa: support up to 20 little free food pantries across the county and evaluate technical assistance needs and options for local food produce access. This includes convening meetings with little free pantry providers and coordinated discussions to understand best practices for supplying little free pantries with food for increased access and the usability of the sites.

Bastrop County, Texas: develop a plan for a county wide coalition for food system resilience, including prevention, response and recovery. This will include identifying roles of partners for response after disaster, and directory of farms, food businesses and responders. The group will also consider the best communication strategies during non-disaster periods, and response during and post-disaster.

Territory of the U.S. Virgin Islands: assess the feasibility for a farmer cooperative in the territory, including listening to challenges and concerns based on the first cooperative that was started and closed. This will include convening meetings of farmers to repair harm from the first cooperative and identify who will work on the team for creating a new cooperative business plan; and determine roles of partners for the cooperative. This group will also consider where this cooperative model fits within the existing Territory Agriculture Group network in the Virgin Islands.

Project 2. Fruit and Vegetable Processing for COVID

The last quarter included the development of an excel cost-comparison sheet to assess pricing for processing fruits and vegetables. Additional outreach to numerous partners for testing the mobile cart also occurred, however, the team has run into additional challenges in finding individuals with capacity to test the cart due to federal funding increasing for local food procurement assistance (LFPA) and local food to schools (LFS) at the federal level because many of our partners are incredibly busy responding to needs for this programming. We continue to reach out to collaborators for testing the cart, and anticipate 2-4 organizations utilizing the financial spreadsheets to understand the potential profitability for processing.

Project 3. Value-added Agriculture/Food Entrepreneur Centers

During this quarter, staff on the food innovation center project continued to meet in a regional group setting, looking at the importance of asset mapping, gap analysis strategies and strategies that have made other food centers successful. All the research will culminate in a report with highlights for AgMRC during the summer of 2023.

Project 4. Rural Grocery Store Development

We have been continuing to research topics related to rural grocery, and to summarize these in a number of articles to be included on AgMRC. We have been assembling a series of web page links that will also be included within these articles. We have also been working to create a financial model that will allow prospective grocery owners to consider various market and financial scenarios to determine viability of a store in the proposed area.

Project 5. Midwest Farm to School and Early Care COVID Response

The fifth group meeting of the Midwest Farm to School and Early Care Networking group took place in early March 2023 and kicked-off the process of collectively determining language and structure for our upcoming best practices report. Via several breakout room discussions, the group determined- from notes and stories collected in previous calls- several best practices for state committee's and coalition's response to COVID-19, and shared learning/resources for food security response in local food procurement and education. Krista and Chelsea, FFED staff, will continue to wordsmith and build out these components for review at our final meeting, on May 30th, 2023. A final report will be released in the summer of 2023.