

Collaborating to strengthen local and regional food systems in Wisconsin

The Wisconsin Local Food Network (WLFN) has embarked on a new project titled *Collaborating to strengthen local and regional food systems in Wisconsin*. This project builds upon current work and strives to strengthen the statewide structure of local food system development by identifying priority topic areas, facilitating working groups, and identifying local/regional projects that WLFN can support with education, information, communication channels and small infusions of funding. WLFN has received support from a UW-Extension Program Innovation Fund grant and the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection that help to initiate this project.

Request for Applications for Market Development

Statewide Topic-based Projects: A portion of the funding for the *Collaborating to strengthen local and regional food systems in Wisconsin* project is available to help groups that are interested in developing a statewide local foods project. Using the information gathered in a recent Wisconsin survey, the three priority topic areas for local food system development are: 1) Market Development, 2) Producer Development, and 3) Infrastructure. Each of these topics have \$2250 designated to it for a statewide project to address hurdles within each topic. Producer Development and Infrastructure projects are already underway. To see a description of these projects please visit the WLFN wiki at <http://wisconsinlocalfood.wetpaint.com/page/WLFN+Topic+Working+Groups/>

1. Market Development

- a. Direct - (Farmers Markets, CSA, Roadside Stands)
- b. Wholesale - (Grocer, Restaurant, Institutional, Farm to School, Hospitals, etc)

Who is eligible to apply?

Proposals will be accepted individuals, groups, businesses and organizations involved in Wisconsin agriculture, Wisconsin food processing, Wisconsin food distribution, Wisconsin food warehousing, Wisconsin retail food establishments, Wisconsin agricultural tourism, Wisconsin food policy organizations, Wisconsin farm to school and institutional efforts, Wisconsin food security efforts, etc. Proposals may involve collaborations or partnerships between producers, food businesses, industry, institutions, academia or community organizations. Applicants may cooperate with any public or private organization. *Projects with broad reaching impacts will receive higher consideration.* Projects should benefit the local food industry statewide and/or the public rather than a single organization, institution, individual or commercial product.

We encourage statewide topic-based projects that identify unmet needs or build upon previous local food system development work. See [Scaling Up: Meeting the Demand for Local Food](#) and the [Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin Program 2008-2009 Annual Impact Report](#) for more information about current and recent local and regional food system development projects.

What kinds of projects could be funded?

Market Development Projects should strengthen economic development and market diversification opportunities for Wisconsin agriculture. Projects can address any demonstrated issue related to the priority topic area, market development. Opportunities and obstacles for this topic area were discussed at the WI Local Food Summit and the summary is attached to this RFA.

What project costs could be covered by these funds?

WLFN will provide \$2,250 to one successful market development project. Project costs may include staff time, meeting costs, publication/report development, etc.

When are proposals due?

The finalized proposals are due by April 11, 2011 to Jane Hansen (see e-mail address below). Reviewers will strive to notify successful applicants by May 3, 2011.

What obligations come with funding?

- Each of the three topic-based groups must identify a leader/liaison that will be responsible for administering the funds and the reporting duties below.
- A progress report on the activities completed by June 30, 2011 and a final report by December 31, 2011.
- Projects will be posted on WLFN wiki website.
- All fund recipients will be invited to report on their progress at the 2012 Wisconsin Local Food Summit.

Application Process:

Proposals should be brief; no more than two pages, single-spaced, 12-point font. Proposals should include the following sections:

1. Title of the project
2. A brief description of the main objectives of the project/timeline of work plan
3. The project leader's name along with a list of other collaborators
4. Describe need for this project
5. A summary of how funds will be used
6. A description of the evaluation plan for the project

Proposals should be e-mailed to:

Jane Hansen, Wisconsin Local Food Network Coordinator, jane.hansen@ces.uwex.edu
Price County UW-Extension