

Vermont Cheese Council Events Committee Meeting – November 12, 2008

Telephone conference: Laini Fondiller, Andy Kehler, Jeff Egan, Linda Miller, Ellen Ogden
Unavailable to attend: Wendy Brewer

1) Discussed cultivating educational events primarily geared for chefs/ restaurants, with a fundraising component. We have budgeted for six dinners and seven tastings.

- Jeff Egan suggested that we use the Vermont Food Network model for their farmer's dinners. Restaurant buys the product. Up to 20% non-alcohol sales go to the VFN. Some restaurants may be only do up to 10%. Sharing costs will be more appealing to both the restaurant and the cheese council. Meaghan Sheridan can be contact to check out to do this. Everyone knows that this is a fundraiser. Ellen has talked with Meghan Sheriden. One drawback is the lack of farm tours if in restaurant and not on farm.
- The idea is to do these dinners on a regional basis.
- Ellen stated that this may become something other than dinners.
- Discussed format of discussion with the cheese maker. At the very least, the cheese maker should be spread out and seated at each table. Perhaps do a reception first and then the sit down meal. Can then have a formal presentation for each course for the cheese maker to describe what the guests are tasting. This may become a bit of a logistical headache if not all of the tables are at the same point.
- To set up, this can be done over the phone with the chef.

ACTION:

- Ellen has started a list of possible restaurants, and contact the following list of restaurants we brainstormed to determine their interest: *Twin Farms in Barnard. Their slow time is Jan through March. Others are the Basin Harbor Club, Kitchen Table Bistro, Elements in St. J., Bistro Sauce in Burlington, Hen of the Woods, Starry Night, The Bearded Frog, Hemingways, Stowe Mountain Lodge, Equinox Hotel, Inn at Weathersfield. (Make sure we don't conflict with VFN farmer's dinners, but Jeff thought they would not be conflicting).*
- Ellen will send Events Committee the pared down list of chefs/restaurants who would like to participate for review.
- Ellen will send list of restaurants willing to host this type of event to VCC members to gauge interest.

2) Briefly discussed the Great Grilled Cheese event to be held in Brattleboro in June 2009.

ACTION:

- Laini will poll VCC members to determine who wants to be involved especially Jon Wright and Mark Fischer. We know that Grafton Village and Jericho Hill Farm are interested.
- Once she has this done, Laini will contact Orly Munzing to say that VCC will support the Great Grilled Cheese event.

3) Discussed other events such as wine and cheese pairing events. Perhaps if we pull out of an event that we have previously participated in, then the sponsor may recognize the value of having the VCC present and will pay to have us there. Ellen remarked that she can always let the individual members know that the event is taking place if they would like to go represent their own farm if the VCC chooses to not attend as many events as in the past.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Simon Miller