

VCC Executive Council Meeting
Wednesday, June 15, 2011
White River Jct., VT 05001

***Present:** Mark Fischer, Christopher Coutant, Rachel Schaal, Jeremy Stephenson, Linda Miller, Sebastian von Trapp*

Treasurer's Report - Discussed how Chris O'Keefe (works for the Vermont Farm Bureau and is currently our bookkeeper) receive information on RBEG deposits. Sebastian is worried that he may not be reconciling account. There was a \$29,000 transaction listed, but it should have been a \$290.00 expense. We once again discussed changing to another bookkeeper. **ACTION:** Rachel will review with other non-profits who they use. Linda will check with Farm Credit whether they offer this service.

Cheese Trail Map/Brochure – Rachel met with Dee Dee on Friday. She will have the revised copy this week. We have another cheesemaker – *Southwind Farmstead*, Jeremy Rousseau, in Pawlet, VT. All of the new cheesemakers are on the map as well as removing others who are no longer VCC members. Rachel will make sure that they are available for the Festival. Dee Dee will be able to do an immediate run.

Festival update – Vendor letter went out today. Rachel met on Monday and walked through physical space. Better signage is planned for this year. Same number of vendors this year. There is a bit of shuffling, but otherwise the same set up. Parking will be different due to flooding. There will be bus service. Additional fans. Educational seminars – Cheese & Charcuterie – Vermont Fermentation with Chris Bailey & Matt Jennings; Aged Cheddar & Beer: Pairings from Vermont with Mike Colameco; Discovering Vermont Wines with Sean Buchanan & Sam Gugino. Marc Druart will be doing a food demo.

Rachel has almost all insurance certificates, and will use Nora Granger, the Festival Intern, to follow up. She will be sending out a layout as well. Rachel feels that she can do this again next year, but we definitely need to have an assistant as well.

For next year, the VCC will need to take a more active role on setting up the seminars. Jody is willing to participate on the day of the Festival, but Rachel will be responsible for setting the curriculum including securing the presenters and ensure that the tasting includes cheeses from the sponsors.

Rachel reminded us that there is a committee from the Annual meeting willing to help line up sponsors. The plan would be to contact this year's sponsors for next year's festival.

Rachel arranged an in-kind with the ACS announcing the VT Cheesemakers Festival. We will display a sign acknowledging the ACS.

ACS -

Educational Committee update – Five initial events all scheduled. The first one is this Friday. All of them are at capacity except for Jasper Hill. The event at Provisions International on Monday, June 27 with Robert Aguilera is sold out. Robert has committed for another event in the Fall.

HACCP Update – Peter would like to come to our next meeting to give us an update. Still working on the templates. Also hoping that this could be used in conjunction with VIAC program. Castanea Foundation. They with Farm Viability Grants. They are major investors in the Cellars at Jasper Hill. They function somewhat like a land trust. Interested in Risk Management and the 17 farms visited by VIAC two years ago which was a review of the facility as well as environmental sampling.

Mark is wondering if the VCC could help fund those cheese plants not visited in the past. This would probably qualify under the RBEG funds. Rather than just replicate the VIAC project, it was discussed that we need to build the supporting infrastructure. This next round needs to take the plants that have had the first round to receive the templates. Mark would like to pull together Peter's work and work with DJ to create this program. The uniformity will help when the FDA becomes involved.

Can use VIAC for swab analysis, but this is only good information. They cannot handle samples from all cheesemakers. Sebastian stated that they do a composite test.

VCC should fund the initial risk reduction. Two years ago the cost was \$3,500. We estimate that there are 30-35 who have not been visited.

Jeremy used the guide put out from the University of Connecticut as a starting point.

Everything points back to the environmental swabs, and so this should be the most elemental requirement we should require from all VCC members. Discussed doing composite sampling. Because VIAC is part of the University of Vermont system, they are not interested in becoming responsible as Siliker does. This would be a great benefit for all VCC members. **ACTION:** We need to set up a meeting for the VCC and VIAC to support food safety. Mark will also reconnect with Castanea to see how much they can help fund.

Next steps:

Talk with VIAC about bringing those who did not participate in the first go round up to speed.

ACTION: Rachel to connect with DJ to get that list.

We also need to ask those plants if they are willing to participate. Our by- laws may need to be changed in future if it is decided that this is a requirement of being a VCC member.

Talk with Castanea about funding

Notify the first group that we will be moving on to a second level of support

We need to do another survey to determine stratification of cheese plant sizes. Plan to do this in September.

VCC representative at events such as Taste of Vermont etc. - Need to have uniform signage. It really looks like a hodge podge at the table. **ACTION:** Christopher offered to create signage, but would need to know ahead of time.

Rachel would like to purchase a new Microsoft Office suite. We suggested that she buy a three license bundle.

For breakfast sponsorship – Rachel believes that this is now covered.

Rachel asked for help manning the VCC table from 11 to 4 pm.

Next meeting: Next Executive Council Meeting Wednesday, August 17 from 1 to 4 pm. We will hold a meeting in July only if necessary.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Simon Miller, Secretary