



# Western Center

FOR RISK MANAGEMENT EDUCATION



NEWSLETTER FOR WESTERN AGRICULTURAL EDUCATORS

OCTOBER 2006

## Using Direct Marketing to Decrease Farm Financial Risk in Two Rural Idaho Communities

Addressing financial risks to farm businesses that arise due to limited understanding of market analysis, financial planning and use of direct marketing strategies was the focus for this project. Small to mid-size farmers and ranchers living in and near the rural communities of St. Maries and Kooskia, Idaho, participated in a series of 3 one-day workshops designed to educate them on direct marketing strategies and related farm financial planning. The project also helped them assess the farm direct marketing potential of products in their community and region, and how to maximize direct market sales. After workshop completion, participants received individual assistance from the project team in the areas of market analysis, financial planning and market access.

Giving participants the opportunity to contribute to topic areas for upcoming workshops, allowed the project team to receive input directly from producers on priority topics. This, combined with detailed post workshop evaluations, provided a basis for designing and preparing education materials for future workshops. Knowing what was being presented next also heightened the participant's enthusiasm and commitment to attending the workshops.

Risk management terms can be intimidating, so workshop content was re-phrased in more producer friendly language that was compelling and attractive to the target audience. Sell What You Grow! Ten Ways to Market your Products Locally & Regionally, Creating Demand for Your Product and Getting the Market Advantage, were workshop titles used to advertise to local farmers.

Producer results were achieved through mentoring by an experienced farmer speaker with assistance from the project team that helped producers gain a better understanding of risk management marketing concepts, including writing a marketing plan and completing a local or regional market analysis. Sixty participants engaged new direct marketing strategies and/or refined existing direct marketing strategies as a result of participating in this project.

Project Director: Colette DePhelps Brown  
Organization: Rural Roots  
Funding Awarded: 2004



The project outlined on the left is one of 102 risk management education projects the Western Center has funded over the past four years. The next RFA will be issued on November 1st, with Pre-Proposals due on December 14, 2006.

We encourage you to apply if you believe your constituency would benefit from improved risk management skills. Funds will be available in July 2007, for projects addressing any of the five risk areas that include production risk, financial risk, marketing risk, legal risk and human resource risk.

We are looking for projects that offer verifiable results for participants, show solid producer demand and have expert collaborations. The highlighted project is an example of a project with strong producer participation that **resulted in** participants making real changes in their marketing strategies.

For more details visit our web site at [www.westrme.wsu.edu](http://www.westrme.wsu.edu).

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