

# 3RD ANNUAL STINNER SUMMIT

Malabar Farm State Park  
October 16, 2009

WORKING TOGETHER FOR  
HEALTHY AGROECOSYSTEMS AND  
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

Sponsored by The Ben Stinner Endowment for Healthy Agroecosystems and Sustainable Communities  
and The Agroecosystems Management Program of The Ohio State University

Rather than the comfortable fall day we had hoped for, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Stinner Summit held on October 16, 2009, was downright cold. All 100+ guests stayed bundled up for the daylong meeting held in the hand-hewn Main Barn at the Malabar Farm State Park.

In his opening remarks to the group, Casey Hoy, Professor and Kellogg Endowed Chair in Agricultural Ecosystems Management at OARDC, referenced his junior high school science teacher who said that the human mind works best at 48 degrees and therefore, expected great results from the day!

The summit was held to honor the memory and work of Ben Stinner, the first Kellogg Endowed Chair of Agroecosystems Management at the OARDC. The Endowment, established at the time of Ben's death in 2004, provides funds to host an annual meeting and to support a yearly project, selected by the group, to continue his work in promoting healthy agroecosystems and sustainable communities.

## Welcoming Reception

Summit guests from across the state began to arrive at 9 am. Displays from a variety of organizations like Innovative Farmers of Ohio (IFO), the Agroecosystems Management Program (AMP) and the Local Roots Market and Café were set up for the guests to review. Job Ebenezer, President of The Technology for the Poor, brought a bike geared to run various tools from a table saw to a

corn sheller. This interesting demonstration showed a practical and innovative energy saving tool that could benefit many. Hot coffee and tea were served to go along with cinnamon rolls made from Ohio grain and an incredible sampling of artisan cheeses generously donated by Brian Schlatter of Canal Junction Farmstead Cheese Company.



Anne Scott, Youth Community Food Specialist with the CS Mott group at MSU and Job Ebenezer, President of Technology for the Poor, discuss the many uses of bike power

Stinner Endowment Board Member, Larry Phelan produced a video which was shown at the beginning of the morning welcoming session highlighting the 4 projects undertaken during the past two years with the assistance of the endowment.

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**Brandon and Michelle present an overview of their Appalachian Staple Foods Collaborative project**

The project coordinators were then introduced to give a more detailed description to the group.

Steve Bosserman presented his working hypotheses on developing local economies. Eight points were designed to help frame what local economies might look like, how they could develop and what elements are needed to sustain them.

Steve has posted his strategies at the [local-foodsystems.org](http://local-foodsystems.org) website under the Advance NorthEast Ohio Partners group. He is looking for feedback and comments on his Organization Design Working Hypothesis for Local Economies.

Michelle Ajamian and Brandon Jaeger, farmers from SE Ohio, received support from the endowment this past year for the business, The Appalachian Staple Foods Collaborative. Their mission through this collaborative is to rebuild a regional bean, grain, and seed staple food system by bringing together farmers and buyers to grow, process and sell high nutrition crops. The Stinner Endowment funds were successfully leveraged for additional funding from other sources as well as to purchase needed harvesting and milling equipment used for small grain and legume production.

Chris Norman, Director of Crown Point Ecology Center, spoke about the NE Ohio Food Congress held at Hiram College in November, 2008. Funds were donated to the Congress from the Endowment to help sponsor the 2 day event. Chris reported that the congress drew over 150 attendees

representing all of the 14 counties of the NE region. A day of farm and ag business tours in Cuyahoga, Summit and Lorain County preceded the Saturday meeting. The outcome of the Congress was the recommendation to create food policy councils at the county level. Chris said several counties have made significant progress towards the development of their food policy councils since the Congress. The next Congress is scheduled for 2010.

Megan Shoenfelt, the Program Coordinator for the AMP group at OARDC, updated the group about the progress of the poultry processing working group formed as the result of the Second Stinner Summit. Charged with investigating equipment which could help producers with adding value to agricultural processing, the group focused on the viability of a mobile processing unit (MPU) to assist poultry producers.

The group met several times during the past year and submitted their recommendations to the Ohio Dept of Agriculture. ODA has expressed an interest in funding a pilot program to have ODA inspected and certified mobile units within the state. The group continues to support these efforts as well as encourage entrepreneurial solutions.



**Summit Attendees had a chance to network and discuss many of the projects underway across the state to strengthen local food systems, promote healthy agroecosystems and support sustainable communities**

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Abbe Turner from Lucky Penny Farm and Brian Schlatter from Canal Junction Farmstead Cheese work with a group to propose strengthening marketing possibilities for Ohio Sheep Dairy producers

### The Mind Map of Progress and Possibilities

A huge display along a paper covered wall in the barn was set up to chart the time line of endowment projects undertaken since the first summit in 2007. The morning session ended with the opportunity for summit participants to add to the display by identifying where the work they do connects to any of the projects and to suggest potential projects for the future.

Lunch was catered by the Malabar Farm Restaurant featuring locally sourced poultry from Tea Hill Farm and delicious selections of Ohio grown fruits and vegetables.

The afternoon focused on the goal of selecting a project for the upcoming year that would support healthy agroecosystems and sustainable communities with the help of the Stinner Endowment funds. A practice called "Open Space" was used to direct the process. Open Space allows a large group to self-organize around topics that are important to them. An initial session is used to allow groups to convene to discuss an idea for a project that may have merit for the larger group to consider. Anyone can present an idea and if willing, facilitate additional discussion and brainstorming to let the idea take shape.

### IDEAS PROPOSED DURING THE AFTERNOON SESSION

#### Regional Hub Systems

develop regional value-added processing hubs with the necessary infrastructure to accommodate various mobile "plug in units" such as an poultry MPU and vegetable blanch/quick freeze units.

#### Regional Iron Chef Competitions

increase awareness of regional and locally grown foods and create new food preparations, bringing together the strengths of growers, chefs, consumers and processors.

#### Let's Get Kids Growing

increase the number of children gardening, develop leadership, and include plans for a youth summit and develop garden test sites particularly in urban areas.

#### Urban Soil Production

create urban soil production sites by diverting food waste to composting opportunities, particularly in urban areas and provide for research and economic data collection to replicate in other areas.

#### Faith Based Support of Urban Agriculture

strengthen opportunities and resources available to churches, increase gardening, urban agriculture and food pantries which would result in healthier food available to the community.

#### Childhood Education

impact health and nutrition and tie it to local sustainability. Coordinate with ODA as a central resource center; link with ODE and school districts with curriculum; develop mobile classrooms and curriculum.

#### Ohio Produced Sheep Cheese

determine the feasibility of developing more opportunities for producing sheep cheese made with local milk and cultures. The approach would research, survey and analyze existing resources and interest.

#### Success Teams

develop a model delivery system for local food system value chains. Identify categories of farmers with possible needs and create a system of mentors to counsel on profitability and sustainability.

#### GIS/Spatial Mapping -Ag Resource Mapping

increase access to data about food/water/energy sheds. The group suggested an interactive system and a workshop to identify pilot areas and bring in technical expertise to support literacy and education.

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A second round is then conducted to flesh out the idea in greater detail with more people joining the group. A final presentation is then made before the main group votes on the preferred project.

A proposal to facilitate the increase and efficiency of **Year Round Local Food Systems** was the project selected to receive funding from the Stinner Summit Endowment for the upcoming year. A working group will be formed to implement the project. The group proposed that funding would be used to host a conference as well as sponsor a keynote speaker for the event. John Anderson volunteered to convene the group. Anyone wishing to join in on the development of this project can contact John at [Anderson.37@osu.edu](mailto:Anderson.37@osu.edu).

As shown on the barn wall, many exciting projects are underway around the state and the mid-west region. Progress is being made to strengthen our local food systems, strengthen the communities we live in while rebuilding healthy agroecosystems. In his closing remarks, Casey reminded the group that advancement can be made on many of the proposed plans even if the Stinner Endowment isn't involved. Relationships formed as a result of sharing common interests and goals can create many opportunities to move forward. The Summit reminds all of us about the timelessness and importance of Ben Stinner's work and most importantly, what can be achieved by working together.

### **THE WINNING PROPOSAL**

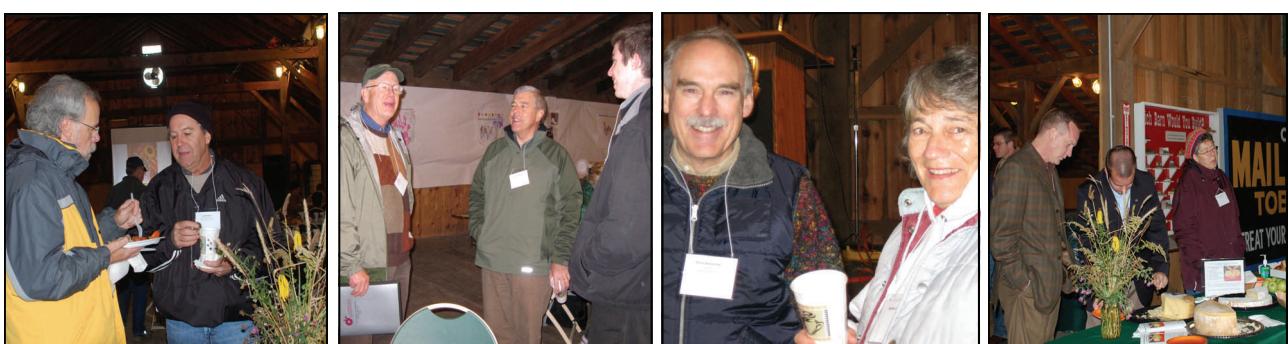
#### **Facilitate Year Round Local Food Systems**

The proposal will bring together experts and existing groups currently involved in successful year round growing by organizing a daylong conference in collaboration with Ohio Department of Agriculture.

The group will identify researchers, educators, organizations and practitioners already actively engaged in developing year round systems and will develop ways to strengthen networking and collaboration across the entire value chain.

#### **Working Group Volunteers**

Charles Hoy	Center for Innovative Food Technology
Stephanie Smith	Center for Innovative Food Technology
Dave Eson	Isidore Foods
Elsa Higby	Youngstown Grows
Brian Schlatter	Canal Junction Farmstead Cheese
Betsy Anderson	Local Roots Market and Cafe
Brian Williams	Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission
Geri Unger	Cleveland Botanical Garden
David Aphorpe	Bon Appétit Management Co.
Sam Rose	Social Synergy
John Anderson	Animal Sciences OARDC



#### **The Agroecosystems Management Program**

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