

NCGT Local Food Supply Chain Apprenticeship **Firsthand Foods**



Eva Moss

Meet Me

- Foreign Service family, Washington, D.C.
- Sewanee: The University of the South; Anthropology
 - Local food economies, intentional communities, health food store & garden, WWOOF permaculture farm NH, Greenhorns
- Building healthy, resilient communities, esp. local level food production;
 - Farm to fork
 - Community Scale
- NCGT & Firsthand Foods
 - Sustainable Meat
 - Women in the field



Firsthand Foods & Marketing Apprenticeship

- Sustainable meat aggregator and food hub in Durham, NC
 - Connects North Carolina's pasture-based livestock producers with local food lovers, restaurants, and retailers. They source from a network of remarkable farmers who raise their animals humanely, on pasture, without using sub-therapeutic antibiotics, animal by-products, or added hormones.*
 - Build a more sustainable food system for North Carolina
- Supplier network, 60 cattle and hog farmers
 - Support local community scale producers in the local foods market
 - Aggregator, distributor, marketer - **Connector**
- Social media, marketing “Stock Box” and other news/events, report writing on relationship with IINC-

My Job

- USDA and Wallace Center Report
 - Partnership with UNC-CH
 - Food Hub Tool Kit
 - Interviews
 - Ethnography
- Stock Box Marketing Research and Proposals
 - Calls, Emails, Reaching Out
 - Research on the market
 - Putting together potential product
- Social media and communications
 - Farm visits and story telling
 - Outreach at local events



UNC-CH Report

- Sustainable and local food sourcing
 - Interest
 - History
 - How it's done
 - Key players
 - Structure of Firsthand Foods, position to approved vendor
 - Case study for USDA and others interested in similar partnership
- Engaging local food supply chains, role of food hubs



“Stock Box”

- Moving the whole animal, controlling for waste and costs
- Bone Stock, new health fad but also ancient practice
 - Weston A. Price Foundation
 - GAPS and Paleo Diets
- Researching what the market looks like
 - Naturopaths
 - Health food markets
 - Farmer
 - Price, product type, packaging and marketing
 - What would engage consumers?

Outcomes

- 8 week period
 - Marketing packet for “Stock Box”
 - Finished case study/report written for the USDA & Wallace Center
 - Blog enhancement
 - Formatted Firsthand Foods rec
 - Social media content development
 - Photos & videos



Lessons Learned

- Enhanced skill sets
 - Marketing portfolio building
 - Report writing for large organization and multi-use
 - Content development for media
 - Sales
- Deepened understanding
 - Livestock industry
 - Food supply channels (layered)
- Relationships among suppliers
- Key players in local food supply chain
- We are a **community**



Lessons Learned

- Alternatives to large-scale food distributors
- Flaws on every level (supply gaps, cost, etc.)
- Time and effort matters, **connection**
 - Sampling at our customers
 - Sharing stories
 - Showing up
- Hard work, just broke even this year
- Lots to know - hogs and cattle



Moving Forward

- Enhanced my understanding and experience with local food systems
 - Farm
 - Law and policy
 - Missing link: market dynamics, esp. local food supply chains
- Reaffirmation working with young farmers and community level food production support
- Equipped with skills for future use (lots of writing in law school)
- After MFALP at Vermont Law School, working in non-profit sector doing advocacy and programmatic work
 - Fieldwork
 - Report writing

“Apprenticeships are the new internship”

- Thank you Firsthand Foods, especially Tina and Jennifer for absolutely everything
- Responsibility, integrity, and independence
 - Inspiration
- Keep the apprentices coming!
 - Valuable experience
 - Real skill development
 - Cutting edge

