

Marketing News

North Dakota Department of Agriculture

June 2004

Pride of Dakota Unveils New Program

We have started a new program in Pride of Dakota - the Pride of Dakota Store Program!

The program provides stores that carry Pride of Dakota products with additional benefits. Benefits include web site advertising, placing the store on a preferred caller list, new product notification, point of sale materials and public relations support. There is no cost for stores to participate in this program. We feel that this is an additional way of increasing awareness and sales of Pride of Dakota products!

Currently, over 35 stores have signed up representing both the gift and the grocery industry! We are always looking for more stores. If you know of someone - give us a call!

For more information on this program you can call Sara at 701-328-4766 or e-mail sawagner@state.nd.us.

Taste of Dakota Event at Hornbacher's A Success

Another very successful Taste of Dakota event hit Fargo on May 1. Hornbacher's Foods on 32nd Avenue in Fargo hosted this event!

More than 20 Pride of Dakota food companies participated by sharing samples of their products with customers at Hornbacher's throughout the day. The customers were anxious to sample the products that are made right here in North Dakota.

"Taste of Dakota gives consumers a great opportunity to see the quality of products that our state has to offer and a chance to visit with the people who make those products," said Agriculture Commissioner Roger Johnson. "Customers always enjoy meeting the people who produce our food."



Connie Holmgren, Holmgren's Thin Bread and Bakery, samples her products at the Taste of Dakota event.

Those involved in Taste of Dakota were very pleased with the results. The staff at Hornbacher's was very excited about the event and would like to continue to support Pride of Dakota and its events in the future.

Don't Miss Pride of Dakota Day at the State Fair

Let's go to the fair! The North Dakota State Fair will take place July 23-31, 2004 in Minot. Monday, July 26, marks the 16th annual Pride of Dakota Day at the fair.

This event is free for members! You will be able to sell your products from 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. under the big tent at the south end of the fairgrounds. We will again be serving a lunch for \$1.00.

A new event this year is a cooking contest featuring "famous chefs" from North Dakota using North Dakota products. We will have an MC and celebrity judges too!

Last year's event attracted over 1,200 people for the lunch alone, that isn't even taking into consideration the shoppers who stopped at the tent in the afternoon! You don't want to miss this exciting day!

If you have any questions on this event, call Sara at (701) 328-4766 or e-mail sawagner@state.nd.us. We hope to see you there!

Continued Success at the Minneapolis Gift Mart

The Department of Agriculture sponsored its' 11th Pride of Dakota showroom at the spring 2004 Minneapolis Gift Mart on March 6-9. Eleven Pride of Dakota companies chose to participate and came away with new sales and valuable contacts for buyers from all over the region.

Companies that participated were: Mable's Taste of Home, Fargo; Crane Creek Gardens, Stanley; Plastics Plus, Bismarck; gmCreations, Minot; House of Mulciber, Fargo; Givinity Press, Fargo; Noodlewear Designs, Bismarck; Thunderbird Ranch Enterprises, Ray; Flax USA, Goodrich; Dolls by B.O.C.H., Bismarck; and Bonnie's Country Classics, Fargo.

The Minneapolis Gift Mart is a wholesale showroom facility that features over 6,000 lines of gift and accessory merchandise in 160 showrooms. In addition to their permanent showrooms, during the August and March markets, temporary booths are set up at the Radisson Hotel South.

Going Back in August

Pride of Dakota is once again sponsoring the Pride of Dakota showroom at the August market, which takes place August, 7-10.

The companies attending the August show are: Mable's Taste of Home, Fargo; Pure Pleasures, Fredonia; Angell's Images, Bismarck; gmCreations, Minot; Heavenly Scents, Menoken; N.P.M.I, New Rockford; Givinity Press, Fargo; Thunderbird Ranch, Ray; Flax USA, Goodrich; Special Essentials, Lankin; and Bonnie's Country Classics, Fargo.

If you have questions on either of these shows, please call Sara at (701) 328-4766 or e-mail sawagner@state.nd.us.

Wholesale Gift Show Keeps Growing

This year's wholesale gift show topped them all!

The Pride of Dakota Wholesale Gift Show was held February 23 at the Ramkota Hotel in Bismarck. This show proved to be a good show.

The number of buyers who attended was higher than in previous years. The company turnout was excellent with over 50 companies participating.

The plan for next year's show is to hold the show towards the end of February in Bismarck. We are thinking of adding an additional spring show on the east side of the state, but the details have yet to be determined.

If you have any questions on this show, call Sara at (701) 328-4766 or e-mail sawagner@state.nd.us.

Dakota Store Set for the Norsk Hostfest

We are taking the Dakota Store back to the Norsk Hostfest!

The Dakota Store is an 8' x 20' gift shop filled with Pride of Dakota products. Last year over 30 companies had products in the Dakota Store. Sales from this event keep increasing each year!

This year's event takes place October 6-9 at the All Seasons Arena in Minot. We are again working with Gifts Dakota Style to run the store.

If you have any questions on this event, please call Sara at (701) 328-4766 or e-mail sawagner@state.nd.us.

Students Dine on North Dakota Products

Agriculture Commissioner Roger Johnson called the 3rd annual Pride of Dakota School Lunch Day on March 23 a "great success" with over 280 schools representing 78,000 students participating. This is the third year that this event has been held in conjunction with Pride of Dakota month.

Local schools participated by preparing menus featuring North Dakota food products. The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction provided sample menus for local school lunch administrators.

A North Dakota label scavenger contest was held this year with students collecting food items with North Dakota labels. Schools across the state participated in a variety of other activities including bread making in a bag, a Pride of Dakota school lunch geography activity, and more.

The event is intended to focus on the emerging food industry in North Dakota and

to encourage local school districts to include local food products on their menus.



Roger dines with Fargo elementary students.

Good Crowd Attends Marketing Seminar

The North Dakota Department of Agriculture sponsored a marketing seminar on May 6, at the Radisson Hotel in Bismarck. The seminar was an information-packed day that featured speakers on numerous topics.

Starting out the marketing seminar was Randy Schneider, from the accounting firm of Senger, Mahlum & Goodhart. Randy is a CPA and he talked to our Pride of Dakota members about pricing your product for profit. Jim Scoville, of Smurfit-Stone Container Corporation spoke to the members on packaging. The afternoon featured Chris Young from The Rainmaker Group. Chris covered a variety of marketing topics such as customer service and the customer experience. Companies who participated were excited about the seminar and the information they gathered from it!

The Rainmaker Group is contracted to present a seminar in the fall dealing with web-based marketing strategies. We have not set a date for the fall seminar, but are looking at the beginning or middle of September. We will let you know!

Mentoring Helps New Members

The mentoring program is up and running! This is a program which allows new members access to information from the seasoned veterans of the Pride of Dakota program. "This is an effort to help young, emerging businesses learn from the experience of our more mature companies," Agriculture Commissioner Roger Johnson said. "We are pleased that 26 companies have volunteered their services to help their fellow POD companies."

All Pride of Dakota packets contain an information form on the mentoring program for new members to fill out. Marketing staff then match the new company with a mentor according to information needed and expertise.

For more information on this program, please contact Sara at 701-328-4766 or e-mail sawagner@state.nd.us.

Developing North Dakota Farmers' Markets

A recent study conducted by the Leopold Center in Ames, Iowa reports that 75 percent of consumers chose "grown locally by family farmers" as their first choice for purchasing produce or meat products. In marketing terms, this study determines that farm freshness, quality and value are factors that drive consumer's overall purchasing decisions.

This is good news for farmers' markets. To date, a total of 32 farmers' markets exist throughout the state of North Dakota and the numbers continue to climb.

Since the beginning of March, the North Dakota Department of Agricultural Marketing Services Division, along with members of the North Dakota Farmers' Market and Growers Association, has been promoting the development of farmers' markets. To date, a total of 22 meetings have been scheduled throughout the state to promote the development of farmers markets. Topics to discuss include: starting a new farmers' market; improving existing farmers' markets and funding a farmers' market through the North Dakota Farmers' Market and Growers Association mini-grant program.

The meetings have been met with a favorable response. A total of 20 markets are expressing interest in utilizing the grant program to either begin a new market or improve their existing market. Some cities interested in beginning new markets are Fargo, Bismarck, Pembina, Linton and Ellendale.

In addition to building farmers' markets, securing essential contact information to begin building a farmers' market directory has been a priority. This information will be accessed through the North Dakota Farmers' Market and Growers Association and the North Dakota Department of Agriculture's website. The farmers' market directory will inform consumers of farmers' market locations, dates, and times. The directory will also serve as a resource for farmers' markets to network and share industry information with each other.

If you are interested in learning more about farmers' markets or the North Dakota Farmers' Market and Growers Association, contact Donna Thronson at 701-328-4763.

Marketing Calendar

July 26	Pride of Dakota Day ND State Fair, Minot
August 7-10	Minneapolis Gift Mart Minneapolis
October 6-9	Norsk Hostfest Minot
November 6-7	Grand Forks Holiday Showcase Alerus Center, Grand Forks
November 13-14	Minot Holiday Showcase All Seasons Arena, Minot
November 20-21	Fargo Holiday Showcase Fargo Civic Auditorium, Fargo
December 4-5	Bismarck Holiday Showcase Bismarck Civic Center, Bismarck

APUC Funds MAP

The Marketing Assistance Program (MAP) continues to be a popular program in Marketing Services. In the latest go-round of the Agricultural Product Utilization Commission, directors awarded \$10,000 for POD food companies looking to expand their markets outside the state and national borders. MAP will help pay travel and lodging expenses for companies while attending approved trade shows.

This year a new initiative, Distributor Development Service (DDS), was added to the MAP request. Administered through MIATCO, this service offers cost-effective steps to help a company decide if a market is appropriate for their product. The total cost of this three-step service is \$600, but through the MAP program, companies could get reimbursed up to \$300. This service will be an optional service to companies who wish to utilize the MAP program.

The MAP program is designed to help North Dakota companies grow by marketing their products out of state. The access to national and international markets, as well as to DDS, provides our companies an excellent opportunity to explore new markets and ultimately increase their sales.

For more information on MAP, visit our website at www.agdepartment.com, under the services section, or call 701-328-2231.

Mark Your Calendars - It's the Holiday Showcases

The Pride of Dakota Holiday Showcase dates have been set! There were scheduling conflicts with two of the facilities this year, so the Minot and the Grand Forks shows have been switched around. Although this may cause some conflict, we hope to see you participate in the showcases!

Here is the schedule:

Grand Forks	November 6-7
Minot	November 13-14
Fargo	November 20-21
Bismarck	December 4-5

We will be sending out the holiday showcase applications in September -so keep your eyes on the mail! Please note that no spot will be reserved until your non-refundable full booth payment is received in the office.

The showcases have continued to grow each year - bringing in over 20,000 buyers in the four shows combined! This is a great place to not only make awesome sales, but to get your name and information out as well!

For more information on the showcases, you can call Sara at 701-328-4766 or e-mail sawagner@state.nd.us.

Welcome New Pride of Dakota Members

Dakota Creations, Inc. Bismarck	Granite Springs Water & Ice, Inc. Minot	Nature's Therapy Wahpeton
Dakota Natural Farms Venturia	It Could Be Worse...Gifts & Graphics Gilby	The Troll's Den Minot
Heartland Flax, Inc Max	Orwig's MLS Tubs, Inc. Ellendale	Dragon Hide Steele
International Certification Services, Inc. Medina	Richard Jorgenson Tioga	Just For You Hillsboro
The Pantry Peddler New England	The Butcher Block, Inc. Oakes	Prairie Flowers West Fargo
Edgeley Meat Processing Plant Edgeley	Tumbleweed Trading Post Bismarck	The Harms Group Bismarck
Flickering Scent-sations Mandan	ND Corn Utilization Council Fargo	Country Scents Ray
Griffins Wood Carvings & Gifts Grand Forks	Pointe of View Winery, LLC Burlington	JP & Lee Foods Fargo
Jan Reid Interiors Valley City	NP Scenes Grand Forks	

Need Help - Check out the Message Board

Want input from other members? Need help with an idea? Don't know where to look for help from your peers? Look no further - check out the Pride of Dakota Message Board! The message board is a free service that our Pride of Dakota members can utilize to communicate with other members.

To begin, all you need to do is go to our website, www.agdepartment.com - go to Pride of Dakota, then message board. To get started you will need to request an account through the North Dakota Department of Agriculture. Once you do that, you will be sent a user name and password. That's is all you need to do!

We encourage companies to post their own questions/messages on the board and occasionally the Department of Agriculture will post questions on there as well. It is a great way to communicate and share information with one another.

If you have questions, please call Sara at 701-328-4766 or e-mail sawagner@state.nd.us.

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