2017 AG TOURISM SUMMIT

Suisun Valley Evolution
To
Ag Tourism
&
Leveraging Broader Visitation Models
Growers loose contracts during grape oversupply, collapse of Tri Valley Growers
Solutions to future ag stability sought.
Solano Irrigation District Fears Detachments
City of Fairfield Councilmembers believe quality of life and property values at risk.
Suisun Valley Fund established, co funded by both to hopefully find a path.
Convergence of opportunity to meet the need.
Growers meet to explore options, seek vehicle.
A set of goals attached to a set of by laws proposed to form Association.
Second meeting votes formation, seats 9 member BOD for Suisun Valley Grape Growers Association. 44 members join. 100% volunteer leadership, executive committee develops and files association documents with CA Sec of State.
Dues of $100 per entity established to fund initial budget approved by BOD.
Prepare to seek grants from Suisun Valley Fund
Insurance, legal and accounting – you need it
Development and Implementation of Programs

- Suisun Valley Fund approves grants for rack card, brochure, web site and PR group. The building of a marketing infrastructure.
- Finding the brand able component – Suisun Valley
- Way finding program proposed, funded and installed on Solano County road right of way
- Grower tech programs developed
- Regional and State Associations leveraged
- Events ultimately created by year three.
A new membership dues concept created to survive sunset of Suisun Valley Fund years before end of funding, deliberate pursuit sustainable Assn

Assimilation of farm trail group supported by Fund, insure uniform messaging to brand.

Renaming to Suisun Valley Vintners and Growers Assn

Dues program phased in over three years as fund winds down, $10/acre per year $200 min/$2000 max.

Fund sunsets and SVVGA financially on it’s own

Events budgeted to provide major source of new funding
Markets and Marketing

- 5 year strategic marketing plan created, focuses to three progressive market service areas all linked by I-80 corridor.
- Visitation model selected over distribution
- Brand messaging document created.
- First phase local awareness in Solano County
- Second phase SF to Sacramento
- Third phase complete Bay Area to Reno/Tahoe
- Total market scope at roughly 6 million
Set expectation of visible results to need three years to reality.

Act like you belong strategy works with larger state organizations, integrated into their efforts

Solano market awareness expands

Post Suisun Valley Fund shift to alliance with Fairfield CVB/BID to carry broader message

Farm stand and tasting room impacts become visible to members.

Suisun Valley works with Solano County to recast zoning and permitting in General Plan Update

2016 tasting room growth at 20+% value and volume
Confluence of Urban and Ag Tourism

- Alliance with Fairfield CVB joins city tourism efforts with products and programs in SV ag tourism.
- Diverse programs, cross sales, sponsorship and room nights sold results.
- Expansion to additional regional CVB, Vacaville. Farm to table, restaurant week components
- Entities realize demand generation capacity; ag tourism visitors to hotel rooms, hotel guest are ag tourism visitors
- Gain broad impacts via synergy created, funding via BID mechanism inside cities.
Committed groups must come together from their own needs, not good idea programs.

Seed funding (if available) must be joined by ‘skin in the game’ contribution.

Specialty ag focus is what works

Use seed money to build marketing infrastructure, dues to sustain long term

Embrace the strengths of professional types with small lifestyle farms with the strengths of seasoned farmers understanding of agriculture to build the organization for long haul.

Build programs that can be integrated into the funded tourism entities around you.
SVVGA needed new demand market for grapes, protracted oversupply threatens all

Saw existence of new market in Eastern US

Took team to trade show to explore, $250,000 sales resulted

Expanded that market via produce distributors that focused to specialty crop.

Consumer acceptance of better product resulted in desire to come see growers and region

2016 saw several groups visit FF and Suisun Valley; one group of 45 client/guests 3-night stay left $12,000 in hotel revenue, $3,000 alone on one evening dinner. Their 2016 product purchase well in excess of $250,000. All win