



JoCo
grows[®]
AGRICULTURE

3-YEAR

MARKETING
Plan

JOCOGROWS.ORG



JoCo Grows Agriculture Marketing Committee

Our Objective

To tell the story of agriculture in Johnston County, past, present, and future as the county grows at a tremendous rate, may we recognize how important it is that JoCo Grows Agriculture.

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COMMITTEE SUMMARY

JoCo Grows Agriculture

JoCo Grows is an ad-hoc community committee located in Smithfield/Johnston County, NC with offices in the NC Cooperative Extension Building, 2736 Hwy 210 West, Smithfield, NC 27577.

Our mission is to educate the county's residents and leadership about the vital importance of agriculture as Johnston County grows, connecting the public to the agriculture surrounding them.

OUR COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Brandon Batten, Chairman

Bryant Spivey

Chris Coates

Chris Smith

Dan Wells

Dennis Durham

Jackson Durham

Donna Bailey-Taylor

Dawn Sousa

Justin Raymond

Kevin Hardison

Mark Wellons

Michelle Pace Davis

Seth Ballance

Shane Lee

Shannon Hopkins

Cherry Johnson

Shelly Johnson

Nicole Youngblood

Tim Britton

Tracy Denning

01

SWOT ANALYSIS

What is a SWOT Analysis?

SWOT analysis (or matrix) is a strategic planning and strategic management technique used to help a person or organization identify Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats related to business competition or project planning.

SWOT ANALYSIS

As the JoCo Grows’ marketing team, our mission is to position agriculture in Johnston County for what it does well, improve what it doesn’t, capitalize on what it can do, and defend against what could challenge it. The first SWOT analysis was completed in 2019, and below are updates and additions.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
What we’re good at. What’s working. What our customers like about us.	What we want to fix. What we want to strengthen. What we want to become more efficient at.	What the industry might soon want. What we think we’ll be good at. What will be our difference-maker.	What we think could hinder our growth. What/who we think could take our customers.
Forming this committee to address the needs of the agriculture community	Telling our story to new and old residents on the importance of agriculture	To have a unified message and marketing plan to achieve mission goals.	Limited resources and staffing to execute mission tactics Funding beyond December 2024. Do we write more grants?
Ag-economy remains strong in the county and enjoys broad support	Need to have communication plan for all disciplines to all target audiences In progress - ongoing.	Need to build relationships with new commissioners, as well as, all elected officials	Growth of county and the concerns of new subdivisions next to farming operations
Some agritourism businesses have well established programs	Pursuing grants to help not only our efforts but those of area farmers. Done, wrote and awarded more than \$260,000	Completing the Ag App with NC Agriculture to unify the county’s assets on a regional and statewide platform Done. What is the future of the program.	Un-checked and un-enforced county land-use plans that protect agriculture lands Land Use Plan approved in 2024, does it help or hurt ag?
Location – access to major highways and NCSU as a resource	The public needs more education on agriculture, and there is a communication gap	Education opportunity to use social media	Politics like possible tariffs, land use plans.

Agriculture has a strong heritage and a story to tell.	Farmers divide themselves amongst individual commodities	Farming has a broad-base appeal. Local farmers are present in the community, involved.	Lawsuits against farmers and public opinion
Leadership/involved citizens and talent including cooperative extension	Lack of overall unity and political action	Growing high-value crops	Too many hands in the pot – middle man
Agriculture feeds you!	Low profit margin and labor costs	More people = more customers	Cost of land going up
JoCo has great agricultural assets including land, machinery and labor		More people to serve, connect, feed, engage, and retail options	
Diversity of Ag (agronomy, veggies, greenhouses, nurseries, livestock, etc.			

COMMITTEE INITIATIVES

The JoCo Grows Committee has the ambitious goal of protecting, advancing, and growing agriculture businesses in Johnston County. To help the county do that, our marketing team pursued the following initiatives in the first three years. Updates and background information are noted here:

INITIATIVE 1

Description: Over the next 24-36 months, we'll continue work on expanding the JoCo Grows communications promoting the website including fresh content, and a blog so that it becomes a go-to resource for our customers' questions about agriculture -- and our number-one source of collecting an email database.

Goal of initiative: To increase our website's rank on Google and create critical top-of-the-funnel marketing content that helps our mission to educate and market agriculture assets in the county.

Metrics to measure success: 5,000 organic page views per month

INITIATIVE 2

Description: Over the next 24-36 months continue the branding of the JoCo Grows Agriculture message through use of the trademarked logo.

Goal of initiative: Use of the trademarked logo will help to expand the awareness of our mission to educate and advocate for the importance of agriculture in Johnston County.

Metrics to measure success: The committee will need to renew the trademark in 2025.

INITIATIVE 3

Description: Over the next 24-36 months the committee will continue development of content for the website, social media channels, curating ag-related events, and BLOGS all to introduce the JoCo Grows Agriculture initiative to the county leadership, residents, and potential visitors within a 50-100 mile radius.

Goal of initiative: Messaging and storytelling elements such as history of agriculture in Johnston County, meet the farmer, agritourism event promotion will be used to gain followers and at the same time, educate target audiences on the importance of agriculture in Johnston County.

Metrics to measure success: Key ROI metrics will include the number of PR releases pick-up by area media outlets, number of followers on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, Pinterest.

INITIATIVE 4

Description: Over the next 24-36 months maintain the 100+ inventory of farms on the NC Farms App, in partnership with the Johnston County Visitors Bureau and NC Cooperative Extension office.

Goal of initiative: Participating in this statewide program creates a centralized database for communicating with area farmers, as well as, have a marketing platform for B2B, B2C, and agritourism events calendar that has state agency support and marketing.

Metrics to measure success: Key ROI metrics include the results of regional marketing increasing sales and visits for area farmers.

INITIATIVE 5

Description: Over the next 24-36 months, the committee will seek out new grants to manage the components of this marketing plan and expand the reach, message, and add additional items to the annual work plan.

Goal of initiative: To have a dedicated staff person to assist farmers with issues facing county growth, to take over PR, social media and other marketing duties from the volunteer committee members will allow full time devotion to achieve the mission of the committee.

Metrics to measure success: Metrics to measure will include increase in all marketing efforts, as well as, adding additional outreach goals such as school presentations, booths at area business expos and festivals locally and regionally.

INITIATIVE 6

Description: The JoCo Grows Agriculture Committee will launch a K-5 agricultural education instrument called the JoCo Grows Junior Extension Agents Adventure Guide to increase the agricultural literacy of 10,000 youth within three academic school years in Johnston County.

Goal of initiative: K-5 youth will explore NC Cooperative Extension's three core focus areas of agriculture & food, health & nutrition, and 4-H youth development to increase their agricultural literacy.

Metrics to measure success: Key ROI will be the number of K-5 students that complete the program.

IDEAS TO REACH MORE EYES AND EARS WITH OUR MESSAGES

Paid email reach via third party services to build direct email lists and broadcast info to residents.

Develop more partnerships with organizations that can share message: Large employers, Johnston County Schools, UNC Health, Johnston County Government, etc.

Work with municipalities to include something in their utility bills - short message/ad.

Next printed 4 x 9 rack card and increased distribution

Adding JoCo Grows message to all farm market receipts with partnership with farms.

Increasing farm sign program for branding efforts. Cost is pretty high for this per sign.

Bi-annual mailing to farm list - updates on the JoCo Grows program of work.

Secure more link backs to the Jocogrows.org website via corporate supporters and all farm partners: (Farm Bureau, State Farm, Credit Union, First Citizens and other large employers in the county)

Funds are not available for joining all chambers of commerce, but see if they might provide opportunities for outreach via the JCVB sponsorship.

Revisit the video project and see what the PIO is able to help the committee with. They might do a video just on the JoCo Grows initiative. They have been very helpful with farm videos. Conduct farmer interviews as part of the video campaigns.

Swag item to revision - window clings on more retail, corporate, and farm doors.

Advocacy efforts: Committee members to meet personally with elected officials on issues established by the committee to move forward. Voluntary Ag district, land use, development, roads, etc.

Add in more partnerships and organizations such as the Johnston County Realtors Association.

Develop a database of photos and videos for our farms and partners to use to share our mission.

In 2024, get the updated NC Department of Agriculture list of Century Farms in Johnston County. Feature or spotlight BLOG and article on these farms.

Assist with a Small Farm Boot Camp similar to ones conducted in Lee County.

Hold a Annual evening event in March and determine a series of topics of interest to farmers, then hold full day seminars on those topics in the fall.

Hold a Farm to Community Dinner involving direct to consumer products highlighting several areas: meat farms, produce, dairy, etc.

Print the Youth/Junior Ag educational booklet developed by Nicole Youngblood for school age children here in Johnston County.

02

MARKETING CAMPAIGNS

TARGET MARKETS

Johnston County and Research Triangle Region

In 2024-26, we're targeting the following counties where we'll tell our stories and reach out to potential customers:

Johnston County

This includes all potential audiences in-county such as local industries, elected officials for all 11 municipalities, county commissioners, chambers of commerce, ag-businesses, civic clubs, farmers, and residents of Johnston County.

50-Mile Radius

Based on consumer spending data research from the Johnston County Visitors Bureau, Johnston County's top markets include the Raleigh/Durham/Chapel Hill area, Goldsboro, and Fayetteville. All marketing efforts should include these target rich areas for special events, B2B and B2C efforts to promote agriculture and to attract visitors to farms.

Buyer Personas

Within our target market(s), we've identified the following personas to represent our ideal consumers:

Leadership

Elected officials, town staff, and civic leaders throughout the county that are well informed on issues such as land use, transportation, and growth, however, our mission will be to educate or make this audience relate these same issues to the county's farming community.

County Residents

County residents are made up of two subsets – those that have lived here all their lives and may not know the issues now facing the farming community and new residents moving here for a rural lifestyle but not truly aware of what living in a farming community involves.

Visitors

Visitors traveling along the major interstates I-95 and I-40 opens up the county's farm experiences to thousands of potential visitors interested in off-the-beaten-path events and seasonal buying opportunities. Potential 50-mile radius visitors include the counties of Wake, Nash, Wilson, Wayne, Harnett, Cumberland, Lee, Durham, and Orange. These markets will include local residents interested in farm experiences and special events.



MESSAGING

The committee has developed some key messages to use with the creative campaigns to further the mission of educating and marketing ads.

MARKET STRATEGY

Product

Johnston County agriculture products includes CSA programs, farmer's markets, pick-your-own farms, wineries, process meat services and products, farm to table dining, special events and school programs, farm rental for weddings/social functions, hunting, and recreation for direct consumers.

The farming communities B2B products include all produce, prepared food products, processed meat services and products, nursery products, sod, greenhouse, wholesale commodities, value-added products, and all ag-business services.

Price

All local ag-businesses will set their own prices based on their own competitive analysis, as the function of this committee is education and promotion, and not setting direct sales prices. The committee will assist in developing tour prices or on-farm event prices by competitive research if needed.

Promotion

JoCo Grows branding and promotion will be used to elevate the value of buying all agriculture products grown in Johnston County.

People

Under the current committee structure the volunteers of JoCo Grows will execute the mission and tactics outlined in this initial marketing plan, in partnership with the Johnston County Cooperative Extension and the Johnston County Visitors Bureau.

Process

Information on product and services will be housed on the JoCo Grows website, NC Cooperative Extension Website, Visit NC Farms App, and through social media marketing outlets.

Physical Presence

The JoCo Grows committee will have a physical presence at area trade shows, countywide festivals and community events, farmers markets, and business expos to extend the mission of community outreach.

MARKETING CHANNELS

Over the course of 2024-26, Extension and Visitors Bureau staff will continue to grow the followers on all the following channels for educating our customers, generating email lists, and developing brand awareness:

JoCo Grows Website

Purpose of channel: Brand Awareness
Metrics to measure success: 5,000 unique page views per month. In the past 12 months, the homepage has received 32,210 views and had 15,935 users.

Visit NC Farms App

Purpose of channel: Connect Johnston County farms with B2B and B2C opportunities as well as with consumers.

Metrics to measure success: Initial inventory of farms and farm products and launch of App has reached 88 active assets, and maintain 100 assets in the next 24-36 months.

Blog and Email Campaigns

Purpose of channel: Creating a content calendar for blogging and email marketing, the message of the JoCo Grows committee.

Metrics to measure success: Goal of one monthly Blog and monthly email blast to target audiences in the county and 50-mile radius.

Facebook

Purpose of channel: Create the JoCo Grows official Facebook page and begin the process of getting followers and posting 2 -3 times a week.

Metrics to measure success: In next 24-36 months reach 5,000 followers. JoCo Grows page currently has 2,600 followers.

In the last 28 days reach has been 76.8K, engagement 4.1K, and 3-second video views, 15.7K. Continue to strive for high reach, engagement and views of content on the page.



Instagram

Purpose of channel: The JoCo Grows official Instagram account is set to run content from the Facebook page posting 2 -3 times a week.

Metrics to measure success: Reach 1,500 followers in the first 24-26 months. (Currently JoCo Grows has 813 followers)

Pinterest

Purpose of channel: Create the JoCo Grows official Pinterest account and begin the process of getting followers and posting 1 time a week.

Metrics to measure success: Set up the JoCo Grows Agriculture accounty and reach 200 followers in the first 12 months.

YouTube

Purpose of channel: Create the JoCo Grows official YouTube channel for future video posts of events and business features.

Metrics to measure success: Future metrics established as staff develops and post video content.

03

GRANTS
REVIEW

TOBACCO TRUST FUND COMMISSION GRANT

In 2021, the staff of the Johnston County Visitors Bureau wrote and was awarded a grant of \$111,900 entitled, **Consumers and Farmers: Bridging the Gap.**

Short Grant Description

The Johnston County Tourism Authority in partnership with NC Cooperative Extension Johnston County Center staff and the JoCo Grows Agriculture Marketing Committee, will help bridge the gap between consumers and the farming community by executing several innovative marketing projects, hold public on-farm events, B2B matching program, and engage in educational outreach to support agricultural profitability and productivity for Johnston County farmers.

Grant Goals & Deliverables

Goal 1 - To use innovative marketing strategies and techniques and educational outreach to enhance awareness of local farm products, events, agritourism and agribusiness opportunities.

Objectives:

Increase revenues for farms and agribusiness through on-farm events, attracting visitors, and farm-to-businesses direct sales.

Increase the number of farms on the NC Farms App from 80 to 100, and increase the promotion of the app locally, regionally, and with visitors to the county.

Increase direct marketing of farm fresh produce, farm related products, road-side stands and farmer's markets, and on-farm events through direct mail campaigns, on-farm signage programs, email marketing, radio advertising, billboards, and social media messaging.

Involve non-agritourism farmers in the "Touch a Truck" and other festivals or events by bringing in farm equipment in conjunction with outreach initiatives.

Organize and hold two county-wide Pop-Up Farm Days on 3-5 farms providing educational booths to hand out literature, handing out swag, and providing family-fun activities.

Measure the direct sales of farms on the NC Farms App from 2020 to 2022, with a goal of 10% increase of direct sales.

Increase followers on JoCo Grows Facebook page to 5,000 followers and growing engagement and reach.

KPIs & Deliverables

Design and produce materials for Down on the Farm Day Itineraries

Design and print materials for On-Farm Market Days

Involve a minimum of (10) farms for On-Farm Market Days, five for each event.

Design and print window clings, farm signs, and provide JoCo Grows Agriculture logo for use by 100 farms in Johnston County.

Weekly radio show during produce season to promote: What's Available for Sale This Week, Special Events, Holiday Events, CSA programs, JoCo Farm Facts

Create, shoot and produce short-form, 12 promotional videos:

2-3 minutes Educational videos on farm practices to educate consumers about farming

3-5 minutes Promotional videos on food preparations, "how to" cooking tips, and popular local recipes.

Design, print and provide informational materials to Master Gardener Volunteers to use in outreach their efforts and clinics.

Attend major ag-related festivals in the county to distribute brochures to educate consumers on buying directly from local farms.

Have members of the JoCo Grows Agriculture Marketing Committee serve on the Land Use Steering Committee. And/or have interested farming community members attend public meetings concerning the future land use plan.

Design, print, and install two billboards to brand JoCo Grows Agriculture and drive traffic to the website. These billboards will be located to reach local traffic and market to consumers and policy makers within Johnston County.

Goal 2 - Bridge the gap between farmers and the art of marketing as it pertains to direct sales opportunities.

Objectives:

Provide farmers with training and technical assistance on innovative marketing strategies and administer a cost share program to support farmers in the implementation of specific marketing projects in order to increase the economic stability and viability of Johnston County farms

Bridge the gap between farmers and restaurant owners in Johnston County to increase B2B direct sales and brand awareness of the JoCo Grows Agriculture campaign.

Use surveying and matching B2B special events to create a network of businesses to farm opportunities to increase production and profitability.

To update the farm to fork video and marketing strategies to expand the B2B potential for farmers and agri-businesses.

Projects & Tactics:

The project will serve up to (50) small farms in the region; many with limited resources for marketing.

These programs will help farmers step up their marketing tactics by providing 50% matching funds of \$500 for direct marketing efforts. Guidelines will be established for applicants to include such marketing support items as writing a marketing plan, logo or graphic design assistance for brochures or advertising, and direct marketing campaigns for seasonal events. This will be accomplished by using the educational programs of NC Cooperative Extension and the marketing expertise of the JCVB.

Farm to fork initiatives have been around for some time, however, the committee would like to increase direct involvement of area restaurant owners with local farmers. Some surveying of local restaurants needs for produce and other locally produced food products will be done and then a matching program will be launched to let restaurants know what they can source directly from a local farmer. Use of the JoCo Grows Agriculture logo on local restaurant menus will be encouraged when and where the committee matches a farm with a restaurant. Print funds will be available to brand the restaurant's menus with the JoCo Grows logo, and reference to locally sourced fresh produce and products.

KPIs and Deliverables:

Develop an interactive program to provide technical assistance for marketing, design materials needed, and to increase participation with farmers with the JoCo Grows Agriculture Marketing Committee.

Provide at least (50) grants of \$500 to local farmers to provide direct marketing assistance.

Revise and reshoot the Farm to Fork video since it was originally shot in 2015.

Conduct a survey of farmers interested in connecting with restaurants, retail, and other agribusinesses and what products they offer.

Conduct a survey of restaurants and agribusiness to gauge interest in connecting with local farmers and what items do they need.

Host a meet and greet event to match farmers with businesses to bridge the gap of B2B opportunities.

Budget items:

(50) grants of \$500 to local farmers to give technical assistance in marketing - \$25,000

Video Production: Farm to Fork Video - \$2,500

(12) In-house produced promotional Videos on local farms, recipes, and how to food videos: \$250 for travel, materials, editing for each video, \$3,000

Survey for farmers and local businesses - \$250

Meet and greet event for farmers and restaurants - \$250

(2) Billboards to brand and drive visits to JoCoGrows.org website: \$18,000

Design and printing billboard vinyl: \$2,000

(2) Down on the Farm Days, exhibits, marketing materials, advertising: \$10,000

Weekly radio interviews and what's for sale promotions: \$15,600

WRAL Out & About advertising package, digital, email, and sponsored content: \$20,000

Facebook advertising, weekly promotion of posts and video: \$5,200

(2) Outdoor portable tent booths for outreach events: \$6,000

Pop-up banners for special & educational outreach events: \$1,500
 Signage for JoCoGrows farms: (80) farms @ \$50, \$4,000
 Marketing of NC Farms App with PR and Influencers: \$3,000
 Hosting fees of NC Farms App: \$3,600
 (5,000) 4 x 9 Rack Card Brochures: \$1,000
 (5,000) Flyers for Special Events: \$2,500
 (1,000) Window clings for businesses and farms: \$2,000
 Re-print menus for JocoGrows matchup between farmers and restaurant owners: (10) restaurant reprints @ \$250 each: \$2,500
 Design, print and distribute: Down on the Farm Itineraries: \$2,000
 (100) Trivia Card Game sets: \$1,500
 (10,000) Bumper stickers for events: \$1,000
 (2) Carolina Today shows featuring JoCo Grows Agriculture program

Grant Project Updates

To date, the NCTTF grant has accomplished many of the grant deliverables including:
 Two 8x10 branded tents were designed and produced for community outreach events
 (20) Cost Share Grants have been awarded to area farmers for logos, websites, promotion, signage
 Postcards printed for Strawberry Harvest Season and Fall Family Fun promotions
 (3) Radio Advertising Campaigns with WQDR including on-air interviews with our farmers, personal farm visits by Amanda Daughtry, and ad package
 Social and Google Ad Campaigns
 (2) Paid billboards, rotating digital billboard, and one comp board
 Community outreach at many county festivals using the JCVB sponsored vendor space
 Increased farm and event listings to 100 on the Visit NC Farms App
 Video Production provided by the County Public Information Office for Fall Family Fun, Blueberry Harvest Season, and revised video for Strawberry Harvest



NC SPECIALTY CROP BLOCK GRANT

In 2022, the staff of the Johnston County Visitors Bureau wrote and was awarded a grant of \$149,315, Johnston County Grows Specialty Crops.

Short Grant Description

The Johnston County Tourism Authority in partnership with NC Cooperative Extension of Johnston County and the JoCo Grows Agriculture Steering Committee, will endeavor to educate residents, visitors, and consumers within the region, the value and benefits of specialty crops grown in Johnston County therefore increasing direct sales for our farmers. Our objectives will be met by executing several innovative marketing projects, holding public on-farm events, designing a marketing plan template, and engaging in educational outreach to support agricultural profitability, distribution, and productivity for Johnston County specialty crop farmers.

Grant Objectives & Deliverables

Objective 1

Develop a marketing plan template or “how to” toolkit for specialty crop farmers in Johnston County, which includes sessions with Cooperative Extension and Visitors Bureau staff to provide detailed and easily executable plans for busy farmers to include checklists, target markets, best practices, and digital footprint tips.

Objective 2

Work with the People First Tourism organization with North Carolina State University to expand on-farm tours, consumer awareness, direct sales portals, and bookable experiences on specialty crop farms in Johnston County, therefore increasing sales of crops and additional tour revenues for local specialty crop farmers.

Objective 3

Host on farm event “days” and tours for specialty crop farmers in Johnston County during peak harvest season for crops such as strawberries, blueberries, muscadine grapes, pumpkins, sweetpotatoes, and flowers to drive on-farm direct sales, provide educational programs, and increase awareness of the “Shop Local JoCo First” initiative.

Budget Outline

Travel Costs - \$500

The Annual NC Agritourism Conference provides farmers, NC Cooperative Extension Staff and the Johnston County Visitors Bureau staff an opportunity to engage with other farmers expanding their farm operations, active learning through educational sessions and networking, and access to resources that will be valuable to specialty crop farmers in Johnston County. Grant funds will be used to send one attendee from the county to benefit from this learning experience in both years of the grant.

Pop-up Banners - \$10,000

Informational Banners - to increase awareness of the top specialty crops in Johnston County, and the local farmers providing crops for consumers will be placed in public spaces throughout the county.

Banners will highlight individual farmers that grow strawberries, blueberries, sunflowers and other flowers, muscadine grapes, and sweetpotatoes, and information on ways to purchase via direct methods, online, area retail locations, and special events. Replacement vinyls-banner vinyls can be replaced to feature individual farms and event messaging around the county when needed. It is expected that at least once the entire order of 30 banners will be updated during the two year grant cycle.

(30) Informational pop-up banners promoting specialty crops importance and where to buy from local farms that will be placed in (7) high schools, (11) town halls, (7) public libraries, county festivals, to increase awareness of specialty crops, ways to buy direct, health benefits, etc.

(30) Banners @ \$200.00 each for \$6,000

**Reprinting vinyl messages to rotate information on other specialty crops during the grant cycle
30 x 150.00 for \$4,500**

Contract with People-First Tourism - \$50,000

People-First Experiences will provide flexible, scalable, hyper-local on-farm experiences that are enjoyable and memorable while directly supporting the specialty crop farmers that make Johnston County special. Through their services and online booking engine, residents and visitors in the Triangle will discover many Johnston County hidden gems exploring our farms, buying directly from our farms, and learning about specialty crops all the while making memories through farm experiences and tours, cultural immersions, and hands-on workshops. Our farmers will not only get to share their stories, personalities, and knowledge, but expand the knowledge of farming, sustain and grow their operations, and discover new ways to market experiences to residents, day trippers and visitors within a 50-miles radius.

Using the services of People-First Tourism allows a partnership with NC State University Cooperative Extension that has a proven track record working with the Greater Raleigh Convention & Visitors Bureau and regional partners. People-First Tourism provides staff, website services, marketing and an online booking engine for direct sales of experiences and produce.

(2) year contract with People First Tourism direct farm sales, tours, & experiences \$25,000 /year
50,000

Direct Marketing - \$20,000

Direct marketing expenses include digital ads, radio ads, social media campaigns, direct email blasts, and print materials to promote the specialty crop on-farm events which expands on the two crop events being promoted with the TTFC grant which is for strawberry and pumpkin on-farm days.

These grant funds will market events for a Blueberry On-Farm Day on four local blueberry farms, and in the fall Sunflower Picking On-Farm Day at three local farms in the county, and Muscadine Grape Picking Vineyard Day at three vineyards in the county.

All advertising programs will have detailed reports on the reach, engagement, audience, and impact using analytics tools through Google, Facebook, Instagram, and will document media placements, email open rates, and growth in sales from special events using benchmark surveys with each farm involved in our programs.

(6) Rack Cards - Blueberry Day, Sunflowers Day, Muscadine Day 0.25 each for \$12,000

(50) radio ads for each farm event (6) 30.00 300 ads for \$9,000

Social Media ads on Facebook & Instagram (12) campaigns @ \$250.00 for \$3,000

Digital and email campaigns (5) campaigns at \$1,000 each for \$5,000

Grant Project Updates

Nicole Youngblood attended NC Agritourism Conference in Charlotte, Feb. 2023 and New Bern, March 2024.

Contracts and meetings held with People First Tourism to develop on-farm experience

(30) Pop-Up Banners designed and printed for specialty crops in Johnston County

Additional postcards printed for Muscadine Grape Picking season and Sweetpotatoes farms with recipes

Social Media and Google Ad campaigns for muscadine grapes and JoCo Grows Agriculture

Work us underway to develop a barn mural project for more long term branding in the county

Design and print additional specialty crops for marketing: blueberries, sunflowers



Farmers markets, road side stands, CSA programs, and buy direct with area farms is on the rise throughout Johnston County. JoCo Grows Agriculture is providing marketing support and avenues to assist farms in the county.



BUDGET – FY 2024-25

Budget based on the grant allocations from Tobacco Trust Fund Commission and the Specialty Crop Block Grant.

Family on-farm Fall events - WQDR campaign	\$5,000.00
Signage - Barn Murals	\$10,000.00
Flyers and postcards	\$2,500.00
Promotional Swag Items	\$2,500.00
Social and Digital Ads	\$2,500.00
Misc. Equipment	\$2,000.00
(25) Cost Grants @ \$500 each	\$12,500.00
B2B Workshop - Business Matching	\$3,000.00
People First Tourism	\$12,500.00
Pop-up Banners (reprints)	\$6,000.00
Advertising for Specialty Crop Sales	\$10,000.00
JCVB Salary & Fringe Benefits	\$36,000.00

IDEAS FOR SUSTAINING FUNDING BEYOND 2024

FUTURE FUNDING

Grant funds conclude in December, 2024, therefore, the need for sustaining funding TBD.

Grants to pursue in FY 23-24 to raise funds to continue programming for JoCo Grows Agriculture: Tobacco Trust Fund Trust

Local Fundraising Efforts by the Committee

Nicole Youngblood submitted a grant entitled, "JoCo Grows Ag Literacy", to the Tobacco Trust Fund Commission in March 2024.

Hosting a Fundraising Event

This marketing plan was prepared by Donna Bailey-Taylor, President/CEO of the Johnston County Visitors Bureau for the JoCo Grows Agriculture Marketing Committee. The Johnston County Visitors Bureau is the official destination marketing organization for the county of Johnston - charged with the mission to attract and serve visitors to the county, therefore, increasing visitor spending and the vitality of the tourism industry.



JOHNSTON COUNTY VISITORS BUREAU
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