



Jody Padgham

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Resources for Direct Marketers in Wisconsin

This publication reviews sources of assistance for direct marketers in Wisconsin.

As a general rule, potential direct marketers should become familiar with: 1) basic principles of business management; 2) ways to market their products; and 3) cultural management of crop(s). There are several resources available in Wisconsin to assist you in learning about each of these areas.

University of Wisconsin—Extension county offices

University of Wisconsin—Extension county faculty in Agriculture and Natural Resources provide assistance in production agriculture and farm management through their knowledge of crop (including horticultural) and livestock production, as well as farm business management and marketing.

Explore UW-Extension's resources by visiting www.uwex.edu or by calling 608/262-3980 and asking for a referral to your county agent/educator.

Wisconsin Technical College System

The Wisconsin Technical College System offers post-secondary educational programs. Each vocational district conducts adult and continuing education classes, workshops and seminars. You can also attend classes in area high schools and other locations, including vocational district campuses. Workshop and seminar offerings may be helpful and cover topics such as sales effectiveness training, taxes and small business, computer programs and starting and managing a business.

For more, visit www.wtcsystem.org or call 608/266-1207.

Wisconsin Department of Commerce

The Wisconsin Department of Commerce has lists of consultants that can help you with business planning or feasibility studies. Their "early planning grants" can fund hiring a consultant to do a feasibility study or business plan.

Area development managers

Commerce area development managers are intended to serve as a source of information for those starting larger businesses. There are seven area development managers in Wisconsin. To find yours, go to the web site or call 800/435-7287. Visit www.commerce.state.wi.us/MT/MT-COM-2900.html or www.commerce.state.wi.us or call 608/266-1018.

Wisconsin Small Business Development Centers (SBDC)

Located on 12 University of Wisconsin campuses around the state, these centers offer many business resources, from individual consultations to classes on business planning. Regional offices have lists of consultants for business planning, feasibility studies or market research. Center staff will review business plans and offer comments. Existing businesses can receive free business counseling.

Learn more from the SBDC web site at www.wisconsin sbdc.org/ or call 800-940-7232.

Agricultural Innovation counselors

Agricultural Innovation counselors are available throughout the state to assist farmers and individuals starting value-added farming businesses with business planning skills as well as one-on-one business counseling.

Visit <http://aic.uwex.edu> or contact Greg Lawless (608-265-2903) or Greg Wise (608-263-7804).

Resource conservation and development (RC&D) districts

Your local RC&D can help direct you to community resources with a focus on conservation-minded economic development. To learn more, go to www.wi.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/rcd.html or call 608/662-4422.

Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP)

DATCP offices provide information and support in a wide range of areas important to the direct marketer.

The *Food Safety and Processing Division* oversees regulations and licensing for food businesses, including retail sales licenses and labeling requirements. It also conducts food safety training.

The *Marketing Division* helps in finding markets, both in Wisconsin (including farmers' markets) and farther afield. DATCP has an *International Marketing Division* which can assist you in locating markets for commodities and value-added products outside U.S. borders. This division manages the Alice in Dairyland and *Something Special from Wisconsin* promotional programs. The *Wisconsin Farm Center* offers support and resources for farms that are going through changes, such as when farm management changes hands between generations. The *Consumer Protection Division* regulates weights and measures, and will check and certify your farmers' market scale.

For more, visit <http://datcp.state.wi.us> or call 608-224-5012.

Savorwisconsin.com

This website features an online directory of food and agricultural products and services in Wisconsin. Direct marketers may self-register on the site. Consumers search the site by location, product or farm/farmer name to find exactly the product they desire. The site also lists events of interest to consumers and direct market producers. Go to www.savorwisconsin.com.

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This project is supported in part by a USDA grant (Agricultural Entrepreneurship—Wisconsin) to the UW-Extension Emerging Agriculture Markets (EAM) Team.

Direct Marketing in Wisconsin is a project of the Cooperative Extension Emerging Agricultural Markets team. For more information on the team's work and Wisconsin's new agricultural markets, visit uwex.edu/ces/agmarkets/. An EEO/AA employer, the University of Wisconsin-Extension, Cooperative Extension provides equal opportunities in employment and

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